



AlbertaRegionalConsortia



THE BARREN GROUNDS

A NOVEL STUDY UNIT

THANK YOU



**FOR MAKING YOUR TEACHER
RESOURCE PUBLICLY
AVAILABLE AND GRANTING
PERMISSION FOR ARPDC TO
ADAPT IT FOR ALBERTA
CURRICULUM.**

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OVERVIEW

- * *The Barren Grounds* by David A. Robertson
- * Grade 6 ELAL and cross-curricular connections (see appendix)
- * 6-7 week timeline
- * Read aloud or traditional novel study options
- * Thematically divided into six sections. Teachers are NOT required to read each section in full before completing suggested activities. Teachers are encouraged to set a pace that works best for their students and learning context.

INTRODUCTION

Much of the content of this unit was designed by teachers in the Langley School District with deliberate attention to the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#), specifically the call to “integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (clause 62) and “build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect (clause 63). ARPDC was granted permission to adapt their teacher resource for Alberta teachers.

Teachers can choose to explore this novel as a read aloud or as a traditional ‘everyone gets a copy of the book’ novel study. Options for both are included in this unit plan and most of the activities can be used with either approach. We offer a list of strategies that teachers can use to create structures within your class to support the *what* and *how* of instruction. As always, teachers know their students and context best; all activities and resources are included as suggestions. Teachers are encouraged to adapt and find meaning for their own classrooms and student population.

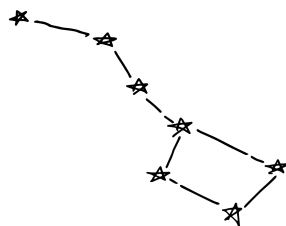
A friendly reminder to look to resources like SORA (subscription through your school division/authority) or Libby (through your public library) to help students access this book (and thousands of others).

ORGANIZATION

This novel study is sorted into seven sections. The opening activity not only provides context for the events of the novel, but it situates the text in Indigenous worldviews. The other six sections are aligned with a key theme that connects to Indigenous pedagogy.

- * Opening Activity: **Looking at the Stars**
- * Section 1 (pg 1-53): **Belonging**
- * Section 2 (pg 54-96): **Land & Place**
- * Section 3 (pg 97-142): **Responsibility**
- * Section 4 (pg 143-183): **Teachings**
- * Section 5 (pg 184-220): **Community Consciousness**
- * Section 6 (pg 221-247): **Identity**

Many of these are also common themes found in literature. Teachers may choose to connect other texts throughout the school year to these themes to allow students to see them in many contexts supporting their analysis of how text forms and structures clarify information and support connecting with self, others, and the world.



TEACHING STRATEGIES (AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION)

Building Cultural Context

Sometimes what you are reading simply will not make sense to you because you lack the cultural context. That does not mean you should avoid these stories. It just means you may have to put a bit more work into getting the full benefit of them than you would with stories from a context you are already completely familiar with.

Chelsea Vowel (Indigenous Writes, pg 98)

It is important to keep this quote in mind when reading this novel (or any other text that represents a perspective that is unfamiliar). Teachers should ask themselves, *What context do my students need to be able to find meaning?*. This question will help to identify the necessity for any knowledge building activities as they move through the novel. Moreover, we know that sensemaking is easier with background knowledge to connect ideas and events to. Next, by being explicit with students about the purpose of building context – it creates a relationship between speaker (author) and listener (reader). Reciprocity or relationality is a significant aspect of the storyteller and listener relationship. Encouraging and being explicit with students about the responsibility of the listener role, to ultimately be able to identify moments where cultural context building is necessary, is a foundational aspect of Indigenous pedagogy.

Story Sharing Protocols

Elder Wilfred Buck (who is featured throughout the Opening Activity) has [this message for teachers](#) when it comes to sharing Indigenous stories in their classrooms. Dr. Jo-ann Archibald (2008) notes that if both “non-Native teachers and Indigenous teachers are to use and tell Indigenous stories, they must begin a cultural-sensitivity learning process that includes gaining knowledge about storytelling protocol and the nature of these stories...this learning process must be guided by local Indigenous educators who also possess the appropriate cultural knowledge”. With this in mind, teachers are encouraged to seek out support from local Elders and Knowledge Keepers when exploring Indigenous tellings in their classroom whenever possible.

Dr. Archibald also shares her thoughts in this video: [On Including Indigenous Stories](#). She says that “teachers may actually use stories that Indigenous people from various communities have developed and published in book or video form...Teachers should be comfortable using [them] if they have been developed by Indigenous people” and if the teachers follow a basic protocol:

- * Identify the storyteller.
- * Identify the Nation and culture the story derives from.
- * Provide cultural context when necessary to support understanding of the story.

Indigenous Language Exploration and Honouring

David Robertson is Norway House Cree, and uses Cree throughout the text. There is a Cree Pronunciation Guide in the appendix. The series itself is called *The Misewa Series*. Misewa in Cree means ‘all that is.’ Sharing this with students would be a great first step in engaging with Indigenous Language in this book. Explore and engage with Indigenous language by:

- * Tracking Indigenous words and their meaning as a class on chart paper and/or in their notebooks, as they are used in the text.
- * Inviting local Elders or Knowledge Keepers to share their language with the students
- * Encouraging students to apply the language in oral language by speaking it, any written reflections by writing it, etc.
- * Exploring a variety of Indigenous Languages on [First Voices](#)
- * Explore various Cree dialects with [Kid's Cree Dictionary](#)
- * Learn more about Cree from [The Canadian Encyclopedia](#) or through this article [Calling Badger and the Symbols of the Spirit Language: The Cree Origins of the Syllabic System by Winona Stevenson](#)
- * Explore the [Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada](#). There are MANY activities that teachers can use in their classroom, even without access to the floor map.
- * Have students share words from their language that are meaningful to them.

Connection to Land

The land is the real teacher. All we need as students of the land is mindfulness. Paying attention is a form of reciprocity with the living world and receiving the teachings with open eyes, open mind, and an open heart.

*Robin Wall Kimmerer + Monique Gray Smith
(Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults, pg 10)*

Land is featured throughout the English Language Arts and Literature curriculum from Kindergarten through Grade Six. Specifically in Grade Six, students are to understand that “land is a text that can be read for multiple meanings and understandings”. First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) in British Columbia, offers this framework for teachers to think about when connecting to land within Indigenous literature:

Connection with place, with the land, is foundational to Indigenous perspectives. Each Indigenous group holds unique worldviews, knowledge, and stories according to its environment and territories. The concept of Place goes far beyond the physical space. It includes a crucial Sense of Place – the memories, emotions, histories, and spiritualities that bind the people to the land.

Five concepts of place have been identified, common to most First Peoples:

- * Place is multidimensional. More than the geographical space, it also holds cultural, emotional, and spiritual spaces which cannot be divided into parts.
- * Place is a relationship. Relationship encompasses both human relationships and the relationships between people and the land.
- * Place is experiential. Experiences a person has on the land give it meaning.
- * Place is local. While there are commonalities, each First Nation has a unique, local understanding of Place. Stories are connected to Place.
- * Place is land-based. Land is interconnected and essential to all aspects of culture. Making connections with place in courses is an integral part of bringing Indigenous perspectives into the classroom. Peoples’ perspectives are influenced by the land they are connected to. That

means including experiential learning in local natural and cultural situations.

Adapted for EFP from Michell et al., *Learning Indigenous Science from Place*, p. 27-28. Retrieved from [English First Peoples: Grade 10-12 Teacher Resource Guide](#)

Building Listening Stamina

Prolonged listening is a skill that has to be built. Having conversations with students about the responsibility of the listener to the storyteller is an important part of Indigenous pedagogy. Additionally, giving students something to do with their hands is a wonderful way to encourage listening, and avoiding students getting distracted. There are several routines (below) that can help students tune into the story.

Be Organized

Teachers know their students best so consideration for how they will help students stay organized throughout this unit of study should be made. A notebook (where handouts could be glued in) or a duotang (where students add pages as they go) could both work.

Assessment

Several assessment structures have been included following the Curricular Connections found in the appendix. Teachers are welcome to change or adjust these as needed. Teachers are encouraged to consider developing additional [Guides to Success](#) or [Single Point Rubrics](#) where they feel it makes sense to include them. Evaluating student work holistically at the end of the novel study may work too, as long as attention is paid to the KUSPs and what they are asking students to demonstrate. Teachers know their students and learning context best and should design their assessments accordingly.

Author's Purpose

The author's purpose is the 'why' behind their writing. This includes their motivation, aims, or what they hope to achieve with their text. Authors often have more than one purpose for their writing. Depending on which resource teachers consult, the number of purposes range from three to eight and some of the purposes share descriptions but have different titles. The ELAL curriculum for Grade 5 lists four purposes: to inform, to persuade, to entertain, and to inspire. The first three purposes make up the PIE acronym (persuade, inform, entertain) and the last (inspire) is not commonly found in teacher resources as a purpose.

Teachers will need to ensure students have a basic understanding of 'author's purpose' before asking or assigning questions related to this concept. Detailed exploration of eight purposes of writing (including examples of text forms) can be found in [First Steps in Literacy Resource Book: Writing](#) (Chapter 2).

Say Something Routine

Version One (Read Aloud Friendly) Teachers will let students know before they begin reading that the class will be doing the *Say Something* activity at the end of the reading. This gives students a heads-up to be thinking while they are listening about what they will contribute. This is a great recursive strategy. Once the reading is complete, go around the classroom for everyone to 'Say Something' with the idea being that everyone's ideas are a contribution to our learning. Each person in the class could contribute a question, a part they liked, a connection to a past part of the book or other text, a prediction, etc. Students may benefit from prompts on the board to support their ideas. Students are also encouraged to feed off one another, by acknowledging one another's ideas (*I want to add on to what Muhammed said...; I really like what Jasneet said, I hadn't thought about it that way because...*) The purpose is that everyone has something of value to contribute to move the collective understanding forward as they engage with the story.

Version Two Put students into pairs or groups of three. They will take turns reading a part of the text and then pausing to *Say Something*. The partner will respond to what was said and then picks up the reading until they stop to "say something". Students

may benefit from prompts or sentence starters. Teachers are encouraged to model this process with the whole class and offer parameters for how often they should be stopping to do the routine. [More details can be found here.](#)

Colour | Symbol | Image (CSI) Routine

The [Colour Symbol Image routine](#) asks learners to:

- read, watch or listen carefully to a stimulus
- identify and distill the essence of ideas
- represent big ideas using a colour, symbol, and image
- justify and explain reasons for their choices

Teachers can use this routine whenever they want to enhance comprehension through distilling of key information and representation of them in non-verbal ways.

Recursive Questions

Asking the same or similar questions to begin discussion, in each section, supports the revisiting and building of understanding over time. It also allows students to acquire meaning, have epiphanies, and connect to the process of learning based on their own contexts. This connects to the First Peoples Principles of patience and time as well as exploring one's own identity. Part of the learning process, over time, is the balance of both: *where we are finding meaning* and *where we do not understand*, is part of this process. Dr. Jo-ann Archibald tells us that our job as teachers is to "[give] learners just enough to ensure understanding and to pique their curiosity to learn more" (*Indigenous Storywork*, 2008).

Sample questions (adapted from Dr. Jo-Ann Archibald's *Indigenous Storywork* pg 136) include:

- * Do you think this could be useful in our thoughts?
- * How does this expand our thinking?
- * What is meaningful to you? Where are you finding meaning? Where are you meaning making?
- * What do you need to learn more about to better understand?

Additionally, teachers can ask

- * What do you notice? What do you wonder?

Character Development

During reading students are asked to keep track of key traits, events, ideas, or phrases that resonate with them around each of the main characters. Specifically the KUSPs require students to examine characters based on what they say, think, or do or what others say and think about them. Collect these ideas on large chart paper, to help all students see and access the information. One idea would be to have students use two different colored sticky notes to track the characterization evidence for self on one colour and from others' perspectives on another. Wherever possible, students would be using evidence from the text to support their thinking. Alternatively, students could track these character profiles in their own notebooks using a similar strategy with the two colours of sticky notes. The templates provided may help organize their thinking (see appendix).

Sketch-Noting, Doodling, Word Collecting, etc

When the teacher is reading aloud or the class is listening to the audio book, this is an effective strategy for helping students make sense of what they are hearing. Students record key words and images that resonate with them while they are listening to the text. **Sketchnoting** is a highly personal process, where students are encouraged to record words or phrases that connect with them, and sketch images that resonate with them. It is key to remember that no one needs to be an artist to participate – this is a tool to help them create meaning from the text as they hear it. [This video](#) might help students get started. Sketchnotes in this way are not meant to be assessed; however, they can be used to help students recall information as part of another assignment.

Additionally, students can be asked to take a blank piece of paper and split it into 3 or 4 sections (depending on the teacher's focus) for **targeted collection** while listening. There might be a section for questions they have, interesting words they hear, sketches of the 'movie in the mind' students see while listening, predictions, or connections they are making to other texts, life experiences, etc. Similar to sketchnoting, providing these tasks for students to focus on while listening can often lead to deeper understanding, personal connections, and sharpening of comprehension skills.

Talking Circles

Talking Circles or Circle Talks are a foundational approach to First Nations pedagogy-in-action since they provide a model for an educational activity that encourages dialogue, respect, the co-creation of learning content, and social discourse. The nuance of subtle energy created from using this respectful approach to talking with others provides a sense of communion and interconnectedness that is not often present in the common methods of communicating in the classroom. When everyone has their turn to speak, when all voices are heard in a respectful and attentive way, the learning atmosphere becomes a rich source of information, identity, and interaction.

First Nations Online Pedagogy

Participants sit in a circle. There is an understanding that each person's ideas and contributions are important. Some talking circles use an object to pass to signify who is speaking; this is not necessary. The conversation moves in a clockwise direction with participants having the option of passing (without consequence). Silence is also an acceptable response. Using "I" statements are encouraged (such as "I feel...") and comments are always made to the question or issue, not to comments someone else has made. The intention is to connect with one another with open hearts. Talking circles are typically used for issues of importance. Teachers are reminded to be aware of local protocols related to Talking Circles and are encouraged to seek guidance from local Elders or Knowledge Keepers if needed.

For more information see [Learn Alberta's Talking Circle Fact Sheet](#) and [Talking Circles Protocol](#).

Medicine Wheel Thinking

Indigenous worldview and knowledge are unique to each Nation. It is important to acknowledge these differences and unique traits and avoid generalizing across this diverse group of peoples. There are many diverse types and forms of Medicine Wheels. Yet an aspect that unites all these unique forms of the Medicine Wheel, is the significant role of balance modelled in the wheel, our lives, and the world around us. At different points in the novel, students can engage with this Indigenous way of

knowing and being. This [video about Medicine Wheels](#) provides great background information. Again, because Medicine Wheels vary across Nations, teachers are encouraged to seek guidance from local Elders or Knowledge Keepers.

Using a graphic organizer (see appendix) or having the four aspects written on the walls of the classroom – have students connect to thinking about: the **Physical** (personal health, body, and/or land, place etc.), the **Mental** (knowledge, learning, etc.), the **Emotional** (the heart, relationships, family, feelings, etc.) and the **Spiritual** (culture, tradition, language, spirit).

When using this tool – be sure to use it in a way that does not only highlight imbalance – but also balance. For example, it can be a strong tool to show when deficits exist (analyzing the plight of Misewa) – but it can also highlight when health and overall wellness exist (when the pack of four are out on their journey working together).

Wayfinding

This is an ongoing activity that may be used for the duration of the novel, and beyond, and can easily be added to land learning/noticing using [‘sit spots’](#) if this is something that is already part of the classroom.

In the long-ago, before Google Maps or even street signs were available, Indigenous peoples found their way by their attentive and keen noticing of the world around them. For this activity students will find a walking route in the neighbourhood of the school. This route should be a distance that can be walked in 20-45 minutes, depending on individual classes and the time teachers wish to allot for this activity. If possible, choose a route that includes cut-through pathways through cul-de-sacs or trails through wooded areas. Instruct students that the class will be walking a route that they will be creating a map for afterwards. Signage may not be included on the map, only landforms (i.e. trees, rocks), and landmarks (i.e. benches, fences, mailboxes etc.) will be used to mark places along the route. Invite students to walk mindfully, noticing the forms around them.

Once returning to the school, students will draw a map of the route using only the landforms/marks they remember. Walk the same route as many times per week as time allows. After each walk, students will continue to add details of their noticings to their maps. A culminating activity may include trading maps with another student, or another class, to use as a guide for the route. Teachers may also want students to revisit their maps during different seasons to see if their landmarks have changed (or can no longer be seen).

Follow-up discussion questions for this activity include

- * What landforms/marks did you notice that you had not noticed on the first walk along the route?
- * Did you and your partner have the same landforms and landmarks?
- * In what ways was the map true to the route?
- * What landforms did the novel characters, Ochek and Arik, use to wayfind their way through the Barren Grounds?
- * How does using landforms/marks as wayfinding rather than using Google Maps, help us to better connect to the land around us?
- * How might you create a mental map using landforms and landmarks of the routes to your hockey rink, friends' houses, the mall or other places you travel to?

Word Inquiry

Adapted from Dr. Peter Bowers' work with Structured Word Inquiry, the Word Inquiry routine (see appendix) can be done as part of a whole class conversation, by small groups or partners, or individually once students have an understanding of morphemes and how words are built. We highly recommend selecting words from a text when doing this as a whole group to help solidify understanding of the definition of the word before exploring it further, which is why each word is accompanied by its sentence from the novel. If students cannot define or use the word properly in the sentence, they will be unable to correctly add to the word family or determine the accuracy of their etymology research.

Here is the routine for Word Inquiry:

- * Pick a word. What does this word mean?

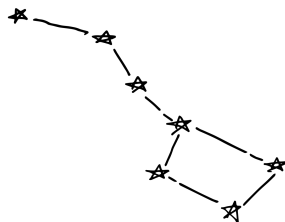
- * How is it built? Box the base and underline the affix(es). Write a word sum.
- * Find the family. What words are part of this word family?
- * What's the story? What is the story behind the spelling of this word? How do the letters function?

Here is a second routine (called Hypothesize the Word Sum - see appendix) that your students might find helpful:

- * How do you think the word is built?
- * What other words share your hypothesized base and/or affixes?
- * Do you need to revise your hypothesis?
- * Investigate and share your discovery.

If your students are not familiar with word sums, word families, or identifying morphemes, build the necessary background knowledge with *Getting Started with Morphology* (search for it at [ARPDC New Curriculum Resources](#)). The story or history of words (known as etymology) can be found in print resources (such as *Oxford School Dictionary of Word Origins* by John Ayto) or online using The [Online Etymology Dictionary](#). The words highlighted in each section are merely samples.

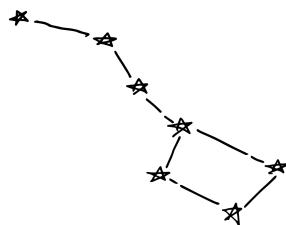
The [Word Searcher](#) tool can help students find words that share the same base but, it is up to the user to know what the words mean as the tool simply lists words with that particular letter combination. Inclusion on the Word Searcher list DOES NOT mean they are part of the same word family. Teachers are encouraged to select words that are appropriate for their students' understanding of morphology.



OPENING ACTIVITY: LOOKING AT THE STARS

Having diverse ideas and knowledge about the notion of the stars (both literal and figurative) helps to model that we all think differently and have different connections to the world around us. It helps to model that different worldviews exist- it is not about one over the other, but rather, the spectrum of ideas that endure. If there are students from other cultures in the class, extend the conversation to include stories they might have about the stars.

[This slide deck](#) has been prepared to support teachers with the opening activity. Instructional notes are in the Speaker Notes below each slide.



SECTION 1: BELONGING

Pages

1-53

Summary

Morgan and Eli are foster siblings living in Winnipeg. This first section introduces students to these characters, as well as the home and school life of Morgan and Eli. This section also includes the first hints of a magical portal.

Important Background Knowledge for Teacher Consideration

Morgan and Eli are **foster children**—a topic that connects deeply to the historical and current child removal policies of the Canadian government. Indigenous children are disproportionately removed from their homes, families, and communities. David Robertson has publicly stated that this book is not an indictment of the foster care system, it does however reflect contemporary Indigenous stories. For more on Davidson’s decision to have the two main characters in care [watch this interview](#).

For your classroom context, **be mindful of how these stories could impact your student population**—having this conversation in conjunction with school counsellors, school administrators, Family Support workers, Aboriginal Support workers, families, and the students themselves will support the success of this novel.

Talking Circle Prompts

- * Where did you find meaning?
- * What is unclear or is an area you think you might need to learn more about?
- * How is this story a guide?
- * What is a gift you have been given that held meaning for you?
- * What are all the ways we can show people we care about them?
- * What does it mean to be welcome? What suggestions do you have to make sure our classroom is welcoming to each other?
- * What does it mean to write from the heart not the head? Have you ever struggled to write what you really feel or mean?

Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus

Language

Learn a Cree greeting: [Cree Minute with Billie Rose – Greetings](#)

Self: Artifact Share

Have students bring in/and or share an artifact of meaning to them. Have students share in a circle about the object. Ask students to discuss or write a reflect on:

- * What do we learn about each other through the objects we care about?

Self: Gifts

The most important thing each of us can know is our unique gift and how to use it in the world.
Robin Wall Kimmerer

Thought provoking question for conversation or writing reflection:

- * Are gifts always things that can be touched, consumed, or held?

Western Worldview	Indigenous Worldview
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• presents, things	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• personal traits, quality

The author uses both views in Eli's artbook. It is both a meaningful gift for him (from his birth father) and is a place where he records his gift (his artistic skills)

Students Reflect:

- * What are your gifts? (Emphasis on quality/strength) Can you think of a life lesson or experience that taught you something which you could look back at as a "gift"?

Community: Role of Children in Society

The two main voices so far in this story are children. Explore the role of children in Indigenous society through the FNESC resource: [Beliefs and Values About Children](#). Teachers could post this in their rooms and refer to them throughout the story. Alternatively teachers could put students into groups and have them take one of the

statements and put it on large paper and illustrate the statement they have been given. Students can then share their visual choices. Post these statements around the room so students can then access these throughout the text, looking for examples of these values in the text as they explore the story.

Please note that exploring *Beliefs and Values About Children* may create a space for deeper exploration of the impact on Indigenous communities when children were/are removed from Indigenous homes due to ongoing systemic racism. Connections can be made using this document to Residential Schools, the 60's Scoop and unsatisfactory access to education which forces many Indigenous children to leave their communities to receive a high school education. This document has a recursive quality that could be used to make connections throughout the text.

Land - Place Based: Understanding the Setting

How aware are we of the weather? Go outside and sense the weather. What temperature do you think about? Is there a time when we don't need to think about the weather? How do different people dress for the weather?

Look at a detailed map of Canada and ask students to think about how the location of a place influences its weather, and its people. Check out some facts about the geography of Manitoba [here](#) and information about Winnipeg (where the story takes place) [here](#).

Ancestors: Cultural Iceberg

Share the Cultural Iceberg (see appendix) with students.

- * In what ways (and to what extent) is what's under the water different from what is above the water? What examples can you think of? Ask for examples of these; students can list or fill out their own, on a copy of the Cultural Iceberg.
- * Discuss how what is under the water is often hidden and harder to realize or understand. The responsibility of the listener/reader of a new culture to them, is to learn beyond the surface. When we learn only about cultural surface items, we are in danger of reinforcing stereotypes, and misinterpreting someone else's culture.

- * What is the difference between knowing a culture and understanding a culture?

This conversation creates opportunities to connect concepts of building culture context, particularly when students can identify when and if they are lacking a cultural context to understand a given situation, text, etc. It is important to note that some aspects of another culture may be 'out of bounds'. There may be sacred knowledge or stories that we are not invited to share.

Self: Repetition

In the latter part of this section the author makes use of repetition:

Morgan asks Emily, "Why are you being so nice to me?" to which Emily responds, "Why wouldn't I be?".

Hours later, in an interaction with Eli, Eli asks, "You got this for me?" in reference to the new book for his drawings. Morgan responds, "Why wouldn't I?"

Ask students to discuss or reflect in a written response:

- * Where do you find meaning in these interactions?
- * Where do we learn how to treat one another?
- * Why would the author choose to set up the conversation and characters in this way?

Self: Identity Map

Explore what makes us, us. Use the Identity, Value Map (see appendix) to think about:

- * What are my strengths and abilities?
- * How do I use my strengths in my family, relationships and communities?

Literature Focus

Predict

Share the image of the front cover of the book and have students individually record details or share orally their completed thoughts/sentences:

- * I notice/see...
- * I predict/expect/hope/think...because....

- * I wonder...

Discussion Questions* (Whole Class/Small Group/Pairs)

*All discussion questions are from [Tundra Books' The Barren Grounds Educator Guide](#).

Avoid having questions that directly connect Morgan/Eli and students. **DO NOT ASK**
How would you feel if you were Morgan/Eli?

- * How does Morgan express her feelings? How is her current situation different from her past foster experiences?
- * Describe Morgan's relationship with Eli, the twelve-year-old boy who is also being fostered in the same home. How has Morgan's childhood differed from Eli's childhood? How have they been similar?
- * Morgan is an avid reader, especially of fantasy novels, and Eli is a gifted artist. Why do you think they connect with one another? Why do you think these interests are so important to them?
- * How do you think Morgan feels about being Indigenous? Why do you think her foster parents Katie and James try so hard to connect her to her Indigenous culture? How does Morgan react to that?

Allusion

An allusion is a brief and indirect reference to something with historical, cultural, literary, or political significance within a text. This [video](#) explains it nicely. Allusions are not part of the ELAL 6 curriculum, but introducing them to students can help them tune into these little nuggets of information hiding in plain sight. There are several throughout the novel that the students may find.

- * Why did the author include these allusions in this section? What effect does this have for the reader?

More ninja steps followed. (pg 4)

"Are you calling me the Tin Man of poetry?" Morgan asked. (pg 23)

Simile

A simile is a comparison using 'like' or 'as'. On page 16, Robertson describes Morgan moving through the busy hallways at school "like she was a jewel thief". Invite students to move around the room in this way. This [Ocean's Twelve movie excerpt](#) shows what it could look like. Ask students to draw or write about another way they could describe moving through a busy school hallway or crowded space.

Notebook Responses

Invite students to select one of these options to do while listening/reading this section. These could be offered as a menu or choice board (see appendix) for future sections as well.

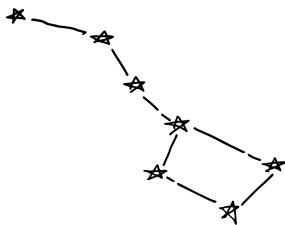
- * **Keyword Summary:** After you have read the section, identify 3 key words that help you remember the most important events or ideas. Using those three words, write a summary of the section.
- * **Tracking Feelings:** Track one of the character's feelings throughout the section. Note what is causing the feelings. Use direct quotes from the text when possible.
- * **Sociogram:** A sociogram is a visual representation of relationships between characters. Draw a circle for each character and write a sentence along the line that connects them. You may wish to draw the circle sizes depending on the importance of the character to the section/story.
- * **Who-What-Why:** Who was the most important character in this section. Retell what this character did in the section and why they took those actions.

Word Inquiry

Teacher Notes – You will help students uncover/discover information about these words. These words are simply suggestions. Please select words that work best for your students. Your role is to guide and discover alongside them. Do not give them the notes directly.

Page	Word	Sentence
9	truthfully	Truthfully, she was kind of surprised that he'd said anything at all. She'd not yet heard him string that many words together at one time.
	<p>What is the base of <truthfully>? What are the affixes?</p> <p>truth+ful+ly</p> <p>What words are part of the <truth> family? Brainstorm a list and write them as word sums.</p> <p>Can you think of other words that use the suffixes <ful> and/or <ly>? What meanings do these suffixes each suggest?</p> <p>Does the history of <truth> help us further understand its current spelling?</p>	
13	detached	The neighbourhood looked pretty, but Morgan always felt detached from it – no matter how high the sun rose, no matter how many times she walked the same route, and whether Eli was trailing behind her or not.
	<p>What is the base of <detached>? What are the affixes? How is it related to <attached>?</p> <p>Visit eytmonline.com and investigate <detach> and <attach>. What questions do you have?</p>	
26	annihilating	"What did those fries ever do to you?"...You're annihilating your fries."
	<p>What is the base of <annihilating>? What other words would be part of this word family?</p> <p>annihilate annihilates annihilated</p> <p>If this is as far as you want to take the inquiry with your students, that's fine. They may not be ready to explore assimilated prefixes.</p> <p>an+nihil+ate+ing → annihilating <an> is an assimilated prefix of <ad> "to" <nihil> from Latin "nothing" <ate> verbal suffix the final non-syllabic <e> is replaced when adding the <ing> suffix With the understanding that <nihil> is the base, students can connect the words <nihilism> and <nihility> to the family.</p>	

31	confrontation disintegrate	Emily fought her way through the animals, then faced down the Bignell Wolf in an epic confrontation, eventually knocking it into the pit of despair where, if legends were true, the wolf would slowly disintegrate over thousands of years in a pool of watercolors.
	<p>How is each word built? What is the base of each word? con+front+ate+ion Look up this word on eytmonline.com to discover the meaning of the morphemes. How does it help us understand the word's meaning?</p> <p>dis+integr+ate <dis> "do the opposite of" + <integrate> "untouched" <in> "not" <tegrate> from Latin root of <i>tangere</i> "to touch" <integr> and <integer> are associated based, both coming from the Latin root <i>tangere</i> Words in this family include integrate, integrity, integral, and integer</p>	
42	ridiculous	Something about the way he said it made her reconsider his claim, even though it was just about the most ridiculous thing she'd ever heard.
	ridicule+ous	
48	offered	Morgan even offered to help, but James quickly told her it wasn't necessary, which made her suspicious.
	<p>of+fer+ed <of> assimilated form of <i>ob</i> "to" + <i>ferre</i> "to bring, to carry" Words in this family include different and conference. What other words share this base? Visit the Word Searcher tool to help you with this investigation.</p>	
48	intermittently	She and Eli glanced at each other intermittently. He looked nervous.
	<p>Related to <intermission> from <i>inter</i> "between" + <i>mittere</i> "let go, send" inter+mittent+ly → intermittently</p>	



SECTION 2: LAND & PLACE

Pages

54-96

Summary

Morgan and Eli grow closer as we learn more about why Morgan reacts and feels the way she does towards her foster parents. Simultaneously, Eli's drawing reveals itself to be more than just a picture- leading Morgan and Eli to discover a new friend and a new world.

Important Background Knowledge for Teacher Consideration

Land-based practices are at the core of indigenous ways of knowing and being. For Eli and Morgan, their ability to reconnect with the land is a homecoming.

Talking Circle Prompts

- * Where did you find meaning?
- * What is unclear or is an area you might need to learn more about?
- * How is this story a guide?
- * Why do they use animals in this story?
- * What people make us feel belonging?
- * Where do we feel that we belong?
- * What do we receive from the land, or what do we get from the land?
- * What do we give back to the land?

Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus

Language

This section features several Cree words. Refer to the pronunciation guide (see appendix) as needed:

- * Iskwésis - girl
- * Tansi - How are you?
- * Astum - Come here; come
- * Ochek - fisher

- * Kiskisitotaso – Don't forget who you are; don't forget yourself (pg 92)

The Calgary Public Library offers a digital [Indigenous Languages Resource Centre](#) which includes this video, [Indigenous Language Lesson: Cree Nation](#).

Land – Place Based: Observation Walk

Teachers will take students out for an observation walk.

- * BEFORE going out OR if you are in an urban setting, discuss the differences between a sound and a noise. Think about how nature provides many sounds, as opposed to human made noise.
- * GO on a senses walk (where students do not speak and engage with their senses). Begin by gathering outside.
- * AFTER the walk has happened, students share or write about what they heard, saw, smelled, felt, or even any tastes.
- * EXTENSION: If you are in an urban setting, ask the students to consider what they would have heard/seen/smelled/ felt 100 years ago? What would we not have heard/seen/smelled/felt 100 years ago?

Medicine Wheel Thinking

When we call a place by name, it is transformed from wilderness to homeland.
Robin Wall Kimmerer

Have students think of their favourite place. Use the Medicine Wheel graphic organizer (see appendix) to guide students through thinking about what that place provides for them:

- * What knowledge does it teach? Comfort does it give?
- * What does it do for their physical health? How does it make them feel?
- * What tradition, family or cultural activity does it connect to?
- * Does this place give you balance?

Students can share about one aspect of their place to the class or in a small group.

Exploring Place and Personal Names

Names carry power and meaning. Have students reflect, research, and/or write about names.

- * What is in a name? What are the traditional meanings of the names of Morgan, Eli, James? Have students also research the meaning of their own

names. What is the story of their name? (This could be a nickname, family name, etc.)

- * How does naming differ in various cultures? Do names in diverse cultures put importance on different things?
- * Research the history of names of places in Alberta. How were our largest centers named? What towns feature Indigenous languages/names? Have any towns changed their names (and why did they do that)? What does naming practices say about the difference in values of Indigenous peoples and the colonizers/settlers?

[Indigenous Place Names in Canada](#)

[Walking Together: Aboriginal Place Names](#)

Land - Place Based: Relationship to Land

Have students complete The Land is Important Because...(see appendix). Invite them to share with a partner or small group.

Read this short article by Robin Wall Kimmerer with your students: [Nature Needs a New Pronoun: To Stop the Age of Extinction Let's Start by Ditching "It"](#)

Referring to nature or earth as "it", reduces the being to a thing and allows us to separate ourselves from nature. Dr. Wall Kimmerer suggests we use the pronoun "ki" (singular) and "kin" (plural). "Ki" is derived from the Anishinaabe word Bemaadiziiaki, meaning *land*. The class could participate in the *Say Something* routine after this article to explore their thoughts and feelings about the author's message.

Supplementary Text: Treaty Words

Use the picture book *Treaty Words: For as Long as the Rivers Flow* to explore the original treaty between Indigenous people and the animal nations from an Anishinaabe perspective. This is a wonderful way for students to build cultural context around the importance of land, relationship to land, and value of all living things.

Read with students and pull-out knowledge that Aimee Craft (Anishinaabe) shares with the reader. This could be done in partners, or as a class (using chart paper or the white board). Have students reflect and share out the teaching that most impacted them. Encourage them to focus first on what they understand and then what is unclear (words, sentences...). This is an opportunity to emphasize the responsibility of the learner; when teachings are generously given, it is important that learners 'do the work' to build context to further their understanding. Providing these sentence starters may be helpful:

- * I found meaning in the line...
- * I now understand...
- * I did not know ... and now I know....
- * I think I still need to know more about...

Invite students to discuss or provide written reflection for this question:

- * How does learning from Aimee Craft help us to better understand *The Barren Grounds*?

Connecting to Place

If a place were captured in time (left completely untouched, like a photograph), what would people learn about us from this place (such as our community, our school, this room)? Invite students to look around and think about that question. Further prompt them with:

- * What can we learn about a person by their place?
- * What do we learn about Ochek from his place?

Image and Memory Connection

Share these two principles of place (adapted for English First Peoples from Michell et al., [Learning Indigenous Science from Place](#)) with the students. Ask students to identify important words within the principle and the overall meaning of the principle.

- * Place is multidimensional. More than the geographical space, it also holds cultural, emotional, and spiritual spaces which cannot be divided into parts.
- * Place is experiential. Experiences a person has on the land give it meaning.

Display four pictures of nature that students would be able to relate to. Select local images that could resonate with students. Number the pictures. Have students look at the images and select one that reminds them of a memory. They may sit quietly to think first before jotting down ideas. Once sufficient time has passed, do a class show of hands for each image to see who connected with what image. Invite students to contribute/share their memory or part of their memory with the class.

(We can become more connected to one another through each other's relationship to the land. Think about how you feel when you meet someone who loves the same place as you or has travelled to your favourite place(s).)

In a debrief conversation, discuss:

- * What do these memories show about how we feel about the land?
- * What similarities/patterns did you hear among all the stories?
- * Do these memories and feelings about land connect to the feelings that characters have about Misewa? If so, how? If not, why?
- * How does your memory relate to the principle(s) or aspect of a principle (such as the key words) that we examined earlier?
- * Did hearing other people's stories help you remember your own?
- * What happens when we hear about other's connections to the land?

Literature Focus

Discussion Questions* (Whole Class/Small Group/Pairs)

*All discussion questions are from [Tundra Books' *The Barren Grounds Educator Guide*](#).

- * Why do you think the residents (the animals) of Misewa refer to the Cree language as "the good words"? Why do you think the author, David Robertson, uses so many Cree words throughout the novel?
- * In our opening activity we learned that *ochek* means fisher. What is a fisher? (Search online for images or videos.) Why do you think of all the animals that could have been chosen as a leader, why is the leader a fisher?

Say Something

Prompt students before reading/listening that they will be doing the *Say Something* routine after. Remind them of the routine. **Avoid student responses that solely summarize. Avoid commenting as a teacher after each student's responses, let student responses flow from one student to the next without adult opinion.**

Encourage responsive listening and encourage students to connect their thinking to what others have shared.

Students may benefit from prompts to guide their thinking:

- * I noticed...
- * I am thinking about...
- * I found meaning when
- * I need to know more about
- * I wonder if...

Foreshadowing Place

Review the definition of foreshadowing. The book opens with a powerful image, that we now see as a glimpse into where she is headed:

“A rhythmic, crunching sound replaced the alarm with this last strike of the snooze button, and a scene of a blizzard came into her mind. Morgan was walking through it, across an endless field. There was a square light in the distance, but she never got closer . . . her feet crunching through the snow.” (p.1)

“His drawings were all villages within beautiful landscapes, with animals walking on two legs through forests and along canyons . . . others were made to face the harsh bite of winter. (p.14)

“No kidding. You’re blowing on me and it’s creepy!” ...

“It came from the paper” (p.41-42)

- * Now that Morgan and Eli have met Ochek, what clues did we see earlier in the novel? Why would the author include these clues?
- * How does he use foreshadowing to showcase the connection to land? To identity?

Creative Thinking: Personal Fantasy Place & Space

This is an activity meant to be worked on and added to as the book progresses so that it culminates or is finished when the class finishes reading the book. Students can sketch, build with loose parts, gather digital or print images, label, and brainstorm words/feelings in an effort to capture their thinking for their personal fantasy place & space.

Offer time for others to offer feedback and ask questions. Personal fantasy places & spaces can be displayed so classmates can complete a gallery walk. Students can use sticky notes or some squares of paper so that they can comment, tell what they liked, or ask a question of the artist/creator. Make sure you discuss ahead of time the importance of constructive feedback etc. No negative comments.

During the sharing of the final pieces, the class can discuss any similarities of place in the artwork. Do they notice certain things that are necessary in each fantasy place? What is not necessary, why do you think the artist includes it in their work?

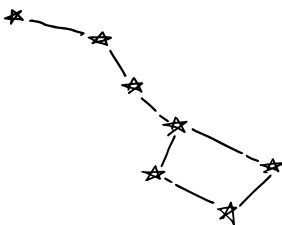
Teachers may wish to extend the creation of the fantasy places to a descriptive writing assignment emphasizing imagery and word choice.

Word Inquiry

Teacher Notes – You will help students uncover/discover information about these words. These words are simply suggestions. Please select words that work best for your students. Your role is to guide and discover alongside them. Do not give them the notes directly.

Page	Word	Sentence
57	triumphantly	In less than ten minutes, she'd pushed the blade through the last bit of paint, and she stood up to regard her work triumphantly.
	What is the base of <triumphantly>? What are the affixes? triumph+ant+ly What words are part of the <triumph> family? Brainstorm a list and write them as word sums.	

Page	Word	Sentence
		<p>Did you think that <tri> might have been a prefix? <tri> is a morpheme with a sense of three, or once every three. What words can you think of that include <tri> as a prefix with this sense of three?</p>
83	ferocious treacherous	<p>The wind was ferocious, equally cold and strong and loud, and the snow was deep and treacherous.</p>
		<p><ous> is a morpheme that converts nouns to adjectives. Meaning 'having, full of, having to do with, doing, inclined to.'</p> <p>feroci+ous From Latin <i>ferocis</i> "fierce, wild-looking"</p> <p>treacher+ous From Old French "to cheat, trick", meaning has evolved over time to include "dangerous"</p>
95	unsettling	<p>Seeing Ochek for the first time when she wasn't delirious from the cold was very unsettling.</p>
		<p>What is the base of this word? How is it built?</p> <p>un+settle+ing →unsettling</p> <p>What words are part of the <settle> family? Brainstorm a list and write them as word sums. There is no definitive evidence that <settle> and <set> derive from the same word origin. Compare their stories on etymonline.com.</p> <p>Does the story of the word help us understand the current spelling?</p>
96	subsequent	<p>Ochek then methodically tapped each subsequent mark until stopping at the one he'd just made. "Today, right here."</p>
		<p>How do you think the word is built?</p> <p>sub+sequ+ent</p> <p>Based on what you know about the meaning of the word, which of these words are NOT part of the word <sequ> family: consequence, sequel, obsequious, sequin. Explain your answer. What do the other three words have in common that the fourth word doesn't?</p>



SECTION 3: RESPONSIBILITY

Pages

97-142

Summary

Morgan and Eli learn more about the Barren Grounds, and the reason why the land is sick. They learn from Ochek and encounter Arik, all while trying to figure out their role as guests to this land. A meeting with the Elders at council launches these four beings on a new journey.

Important Background Knowledge for Teacher Consideration

Teachers need to be conscious that there are particularly important sacred teachings for Indigenous people that are embedded in this text. Robertson has included Cree language and stories throughout the text. **Although it is in a fantasy world – these are real teaching and real beliefs.**

Talking Circle Prompts

- * Where did you find meaning?
- * What is unclear or is an area you think you might need to learn more about?
- * How is this story a guide?
- * In what ways is the land sick today, in our area, in Alberta, in Canada? In the world?
- * How can we help the land?
- * What is one thing I could practise today to help the land?
- * What are 5 things I think I should know?
- * How would we feel if the animals that we eat could talk? Would we feel different and why?

Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus

Language

This section features a few more new Cree words. Refer to the pronunciation guide (see appendix) as needed:

- * Muskwa - bear
- * Tahtakiw - crane
- * Pimíhkán - pemmican
- * Arikwachas - squirrel
- * Pisiskiw - animal
- * Api - sit
- * Miskinahk - turtle
- * Oho - owl

Have students investigate these words in a local Indigenous language either through online resources or by inviting an Elder or Knowledge Keeper to your classroom.

Supplementary Text: On The Trapline

*Reconciliation is more than just healing from trauma.
It's connecting, or reconnecting with people, culture, language, community.
David Robertson*

Morgan, Eli and Oshek are headed to Oshek's trapline. It is important for students to understand what a trapline is and the importance to the Cree people. In the picture book *On the Trapline*, a boy and his moshom take a trip to the trapline where his grandpa and family used to live off the land. This is a terrific book that explores the connection between the boy, his grandfather, and the land. There is a brief mention of Moshom going to school. There is a brief, yet powerful mentioning of residential schools:

When the boy asks him "what it was like going to school after living on the trapline." He was quiet for a long time. 'I learned in both places,' he says. 'I just learned different things.'"

Cree words are woven throughout the story. The book does a wonderful job of showing the reconnection to culture and land. Invite students to discuss or provide written reflection for these questions:

- * How does *On the Trapline* connect to *The Barren Grounds*? How do these connections help the reader better understand what's happening in the novel?
- * Both texts are written by David Robertson. Do these texts share common purposes? Explain your thinking.

Medicine Wheel Thinking

Have students fill out the Medicine Wheel graphic organizer (see appendix) for the community of Misewa. Have them think about the Mental, Emotional, Spiritual and Physical aspects of the community. This could be done in pairs or small groups, then collaboratively built together on the board.

Have students debrief how using the lens of the medicine wheel helps us to learn and understand what Misewa is going through.

- * What do you notice?
- * What does this imbalance mean?
- * What needs to be more balanced? What would balance look like? Feel like?
- * Whose responsibility is it to find balance? In Misewa? In our communities?

The Calendar

In the novel the characters refer to the seasons as The Green Time and The White Time. Different Nations have different ways of identifying the times of the year. Invite students to explore some of these Seasonal Calendars.

- * [Stellat'en First Nation Seasonal Calendar](#)
- * *When the Trees Crackle with Cold: A Cree Calendar Pisimwasinahikan* by Bernice Johnson-Laxdal
- * [The Five Seasons of the Ojibwe Calendar](#)
- * [Stó:lō Lunar Year](#)
- * [Indigenous Calendars Mark Much more than the Spring Equinox](#)
- * [Thirteen Moons Calendars of the Wsanec](#)

For discussion:

- * How do the seasons affect your life? Does the calendar affect your life? How? Does the calendar affect the structure of time/ how time is divided or used in our own lives? What affects your life more...the seasons, or the calendar, in other words, the way time is organized for us in our day to day lives?
- * Can you imagine a world where the seasons are more important than "time"? What would that look like? What would be important in a life where seasons are more important than the calendar, or time on a clock?

- * What was happening at the time you were born on the land and in the sky?

Governance

David Robertson has talked a lot about how he wanted to create a fantasy world, where the values, traditions and culture were rooted in Indigenous ways. One example of this is through The Council. To support building student context and understanding of the complex and diverse practices of Indigenous governance teachers may choose to share *First Nations Laws and the Land, Traditional Governments*, and/or *First Nations Governments* (see appendix) with their students.

- * How had the author included these Indigenous values of governance in the text? What impact does it have on the reader?

Literature Focus

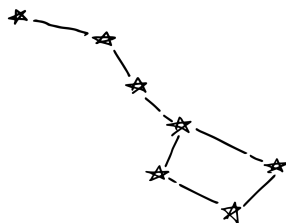
Discussion Questions

- * What is resilience? What are examples of resilience in the text? When have you been resilient?
- * How does reading about resilience in a fictional world help us to understand resilience in the real world?
- * In what ways does resilience connect or contribute to responsibility (or vice versa)?
- * How has responsibility been shown so far in the novel? What is the author telling us or teaching us about responsibility?

Word Inquiry

Teacher Notes – You will help students uncover/discover information about these words. These words are simply suggestions. Please select words that work best for your students. Your role is to guide and discover alongside them. Do not give them the notes directly.

Page	Word	Sentence
119	intentions	The man came with what seemed like good intentions, so he was allowed to live among us.
	<p>The base of this word is part of a collection of associated bases from the same Latin root <i>tendere</i>. Visit etymonline.com and search <tendere>. Most of the words that show up are derived from this Latin root. Have students start to make lists of words that have <tend> as a base, another for <tent>, and a third for <tens>. How do each of these words listed have a sense of “stretch or strain”?</p> <p>in+tent+ion+s Associated bases from Latin root <i>tendere</i> tend/tent/tens ‘to stretch or strain’</p>	
142	steely	“I think what she’s trying to say, Muskwa”-- Ochek shot Arik a steely glare – “is that she’s putting her life on the line for this.”
	<p>steel+y <y> “full of or characterized by” What other words can you think of that use <y> in this way?</p>	



SECTION 4: TEACHINGS

Pages

143-183

Summary

Ochek, Arik, Morgan, and Eli head out on their adventure. Morgan and Eli learn more about Misewa from Arik and Ochek, all while Morgan continues to have flashbacks in her dreams. The four travellers encounter dangerous heights and a furry 'friend.'

Important Background Knowledge for Teacher Consideration

Morgan continues to have flashbacks of her birth mother – with hints of a non consensual child removal. There is a Wolf fight, with weapons (hatchet, etc.).

Talking Circle Prompts

- * Where did you find meaning?
- * What is unclear or is an area you think you might need to learn more about?
- * How is this story a guide?
- * What do the characters in Barren Grounds fear? Do you fear the same things?
- * What do you fear?
- * What animals have we attached fear to? (wolves) (sharks) (insects) (bears)?
- * When did you first learn to fear bears even though there are positive representations of bears like Winnie-the-Pooh and Paddington Bear?

Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus

Land as Teacher

There are many things we can learn from the land. This video talks about [reciprocity in relationship to the land](#) and this one is about [Cree lessons inspired by nature](#). [Water](#) is an essential part of human survival and it is spiritually significant for Indigenous peoples as well.

After watching these videos have students reflect or write using the following prompts to guide their thinking (if needed):

- * I noticed...
- * I am thinking about...
- * I found meaning when...
- * I wonder if...
- * I need to know more about...

Animals

Animals have a spiritual and environmental connection to land and people. Animals have different meanings and significance in different Indigenous Nations. Because significance is connected to land and place, where the Indigenous Nation is located influences what is significant. For example salmon is not as significant to People of the Plains as it would be to a coastal nation such as the Haida.

Have students divide a piece of paper into four parts and label each one with an animal they are familiar with/is significant to your area. Have them make jot notes on the following questions:

- * What comes to mind when you think of each animal?
- * Can you recall any rhymes or stories that connect to each animal?
- * Can you recall any experiences with these animals?

Have students share with a partner or small group. Lastly, ask them to consider this question for each animal:

- * What abilities does the animal have that humans do not have?

Or in other words,

- * What have these animals taught you?

Purposefully allow students to sit with the unknown of this question. Many students may not have a worldview that supports animals as teachers. Encourage the conversation of 'I haven't thought of it that way before.'

If this is a concept teachers would like to support further with texts for the classroom library, check out the *Mother of Xsan series* by Hetxw'ms Gyetxw (Brett D. Huson)

which connects the world to the matrilineal society of the Gitksan people, located in the Pacific Northwest Interior of British Columbia.

Literature Focus

Discussion Questions* (Whole Class/Small Group/Pairs)

*All discussion questions are from [Tundra Books' The Barren Grounds Educator Guide](#).

- * In the novel, Ochek states, "All things are connected. Your world and this one, the sky and the land. All that is." Cree Elders and Knowledge Keepers talk about "misewa" – all that is. Why do you think the author uses "Misewa" as the name of the community?
- * What do you think is the significance and meaning behind Morgan's dreams? Why do you think her mother repeats "kiskisitotaso" repeatedly in her dream?

Say Something

Prompt students before reading/listening that they will be doing the *Say Something* routine after. Remind them of the routine. **Avoid student responses that solely summarize. Avoid commenting as a teacher after each student's responses, let student responses flow from one student to the next without adult opinion.**

Encourage responsive listening and encourage students to connect their thinking to what others have shared.

Students may benefit from prompts to guide their thinking:

- * I noticed....
- * I am thinking about...
- * I found meaning when
- * I need to know more about
- * I wonder if...

Practice Active Listening

With students in pairs, ask students to think of a short story, real or imagined. Have one partner go first, telling the story for one-minute. After one minute is up, the other student must retell the story back to the storyteller. Did the repeater get it right? Were

there crucial details missing, or all present in the retelling of the story? Now switch, the re-teller now tells their story, and the listener must repeat it. Don't forget to time for one minute of storytelling!

Switch partners, moving a few partners to the left or right. Do this a couple of times.

Did students notice anything about the skill of listening that they did not notice before? Did they find it difficult or easy to listen actively for a minute without speaking?

Hyperbole

Review/teach what hyperbole is. [This video](#) might help. There is an example of this on page 148.

"No, I heard him," she said. "I just feel like peeing my pants."

"Oh my," Arik said. "Your legs would get so cold."

...

"No, she's scared," Eli said. "So am I."

Have students brainstorm other hyperboles they have heard and/or use frequently. Discuss:

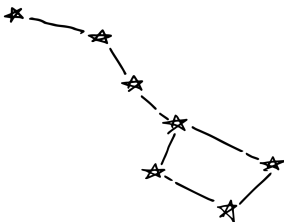
- * Why would an author use this figurative language in their writing?
- * How did Robertson use it to create humour between the characters?

Word Inquiry

Teacher Notes – You will help students uncover/discover information about these words. These words are simply suggestions. Please select words that work best for your students. Your role is to guide and discover alongside them. Do not give them the notes directly.

Page	Word	Sentence
144	aggressively	It wasn't until the wind started to blow more aggressively on the second day that something began to feel different.
	ag+gress+ive+ly <ag> assimilated form of <ad> "to" + Latin <i>gressus</i> "to step" <ive> word forming element that makes adjectives from verbs "pertaining to, tending to, doing"	

147	concentrating	Morgan did the same, right behind him, concentrating on the back of his head and not looking down.
<p>con+centre+ate+ing</p> <p>This word is a great opportunity to share the story of Noah Webster Jr. and his quest for reforming American spelling while the United States was in its infancy. One of the changes he proposed (and is still used) was changing <re> word to <er> words (ie. center, theater, meter). Some people choose to write the base as <cent(e)r(e)>, but it's perhaps easier to remember the story of Mr. Webster and know that some of our words feature <centre> as the base and others feature <center>.</p>		
157	gradually persistently	The mountain sloped gradually but persistently, and they were following the suggestion of a path, which, in the Green Time might've been an actual path.
<p>What is the base of each word? What are the affixes? What words are part of each family? Brainstorm a list and write them as word sums. What do each of the morphemes mean or give the sense of? Does the history of each word help us further understand its current spelling or help us discover other words in the family?</p> <p>grade+u+al+ly</p> <p>per+sist+ent+ly Not related to <sister></p>		
180	forgiveness	You literally asked for forgiveness!
<p>What is the base of this word? What are the affixes? What words are part of this word family? Brainstorm a list and write them as word sums. What do each of the morphemes mean or give the sense of? Does the history of this word help us further understand its current spelling or help us discover other words in the family?</p> <p>for+give+ness →forgiveness</p>		



SECTION 5: COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS

Pages

184-220

Summary

Ochek, Arik, Morgan and Eli are continuing their journey, getting closer to both danger and to their ultimate goal. Ochek makes a sacrifice, and the others must continue – with help from an unlikely ally.

Important Background Knowledge for Teacher Consideration

One of the reasons that the original Legend of the Fisher was recommended to be used at the onset of this text, as it foreshadows/prepares us for Ochek's death. A focus in this section should therefore be more on the teaching of Ochek than the literal interpretation of it.

Talking Circle Prompts

- * Where did you find meaning?
- * What is unclear or is an area you think you might need to learn more about?
- * How is this story a guide?
- * How has your understanding of story and place changed since the beginning of the book?
- * What are all the ways we can show people we care about them?
- * How are some ways that we can honour all our relations?
- * How has Morgan changed? How can you tell? What did she learn about herself that has caused her to change? What has caused this change in Morgan? If Morgan had the choice to change, do you think she would choose change, or choose staying as she was before?

Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus

Constellation

Return to the opening activity story by revisiting the video or by reading the picture book, *Fisher Finds the Bag of Summer* by David Robertson. Consider these questions

orally or in written reflection (before sharing aloud):

- * Where do you find meaning in this story – now that your knowledge has grown?
- * How does this relate to *The Barren Grounds*? What do you notice?
- * What new questions do you have now?
- * How is Ochek's sacrifice in *The Barren Grounds* better understood alongside this Cree teaching?

All My Relations

I have learned that to love this country [Canada] means to love its people. All of them. When we say "all my relations," it's meant in a teaching way, to rekindle community. We are part of the great, grand circle of humanity, and we need each other.

Richard Wagamese (2008)

Write the phrase "All My Relations" on the board. Ask students if they have ever heard this phrase and in what context. If students have heard it/know it, have them explain what it means. If students haven't heard it, ask them to predict what it means.

Share this quote from Thomas King with students. Have the students determine what All My Relations is and is not by finding key words in the quote.

"All my relations" is at first a reminder of who we are and of our relationship with both our family and our relatives. It also reminds us of the extended relationship we share with all human beings. But the relationship that Native people see go further, the web of kinship extending to the animals, to the birds, to the fish, to the plants, to all the animate and inanimate forms that can be seen or imagined. More than that, 'all my relations' is an encouragement for us to accept the responsibilities we have within this universal family by living our lives in a harmonious manner (a common admonishment is to say of someone that they act as if they have no relations).

Thomas King

Invite a local Elder or Knowledge Keeper to your classroom to share what their understanding of this phrase means.

Have students apply their understanding of this phrase by creating an image or symbol that represents the meaning of this phrase and explaining their choices. Extend this understanding by asking students to find examples of actions in the text that represent the ideas behind *All My Relations*, as well as examples of actions in the text that go against the ideas behind *All My Relations*.

Consensus Activity

In a community, making decisions for everyone can be a big responsibility. Have students engage in a consensus circle to decide. The topic of the consensus circle can be one that will be acted on (a decision for a class activity) or can be one that explores ideas (a topic selected from the text). Consensus circles should be small: 4-5 people, not as a whole class. When creating a consensus activity, it is important for students to be asked a question that isn't Yes/No. It must be open ended to allow varied student ideas and have the capacity to blend ideas to form consensus.

Try out the Consensus Activity (see appendix). Teachers may wish to adapt the field trip choices to local availability or other cross curricular connections.

Tradition and Modernity

I am not going to belabour the frozen-in-time approach and how flipping bizarre it is to read about people telling us not to haul game home in pick-up trucks, or use kitchen appliances to make frybread, or use gasoline in our motorboats, because once you think about it, the weirdness should be self-evident... We are just as capable of adapting to new technology and using it according to traditional beliefs and philosophies as you are.
Chelsea Vowel

Chelsea Vowel is a Métis author talking in the quote above about the stereotypes of freezing Indigenous people in the past. David Robertson is a contemporary writer, using traditional influences. Have students discuss and/or reflectively write about these questions:

- * How can a person be both traditional and modern at the same time?
- * What is a traditional philosophy? How can that philosophy be applied in a modern world?

Literature Focus

Discussion Questions* (Whole Class/Small Group/Pairs)

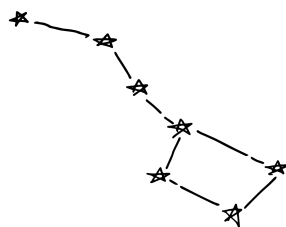
*All discussion questions are from [Tundra Books' *The Barren Grounds Educator Guide*](#).

- * The Barren Grounds contains Cree teachings around sustainability and the land. What are some of these beliefs and concepts? What does the man represent? How does this connect to issues in the world today?
- * Mistapew is a giant being in Cree stories that, according to Ocheq, "takes your soul and leaves only flesh and bones behind." How does the author use Mistapew in the story? Does Mistapew remind you of similar creatures in other stories?

Conflict

One element of fiction texts is conflict. Review/teach this concept to your students. [This video](#) might be helpful (even though it goes into greater detail than required by the KUSP). Discuss as a class or in small groups:

- * What are some of the examples of conflict in the story? Are some more important than others? Explain.
- * What is the author's purpose in including these conflicts in this story?
- * Rather than talking about conflict, Indigenous perspectives might ask where the imbalance might be. Does this understanding make it easier to explore the events and characters of the book?



SECTION 6: IDENTITY

Pages

221-247

Summary

Arik, Morgan, and Eli travel back as a trio. They meet with The Council and determine it's time to leave Misewa. Entering back into life in Winnipeg, Morgan and Eli are stronger and more confident in who they are.

Important Background Knowledge for Teacher Consideration

David Robertson speaks about the agency of Morgan and Eli – as the heroes of their own story. Nobody 'saves' them, they 'save' themselves. This emphasis on strength, resilience and knowledge is an important part of the conclusion of this text.

Reminder: this is the first of a series (Misewa Saga); point your students in the direction of The Great Bear, The Stone Child, and The Portal Keeper (coming Oct 2023).

Talking Circle Prompts

- * Where did you find meaning?
- * How is this story a guide?
- * What education do we receive outside of school? Who teaches us?
- * What does it mean to write from the heart not the head? Have you ever struggled to write what you really feel or mean? Have you ever struggled to SAY what you really feel or mean? Was it your heart that struggled, or your head?
- * What do we receive from the land, or what do we get from the land? - Why is connecting to the land so important?
- * Why is feeling a sense of belonging so important?

Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus

Circling Back

*No man ever steps in the same river twice,
for it's not the same river and he's not the same man.*

Heraclitus (Greek Philosopher)

Teachers are encouraged to circle back to activities or strategies from previous sections. This could be something that needs more time to be completed and celebrated or something that the class just didn't get to earlier.

Is there a way to return to where the class began? Maybe students revisit some of Wilfred Buck's quotes or listen to a star telling as part of a prediction activity for the next books in the series.

Community as a Character

In many Indigenous stories, there is not a single identifiable 'main character'. Indigenous author Drew Hayden Taylor often discusses how in Indigenous stories, the community is the main character. Have students THINK, PAIR, SHARE these questions:

- * What is a community?
- * How would you describe the community or communities in this story?
- * How was *community* the 'main character' of this text? Explain your answer.

CSI: The Journey

Using the *CSI: Colour, Symbol, Image* graphic organizer (see appendix), students will explore one of the journeys that they are reflecting on.

- * Morgan's Journey
 - o What were Morgan's journeys?
 - o How has she evolved as a person?
 - o What new understandings does she have about herself?
- * Community's Journey
 - o What is Misewa's journey?
 - o What new understanding does the community have about itself?
- * The Reader's Journey (ie YOU)
 - o What has your journey been with this novel?

- What do you understand now that you didn't at the beginning of this novel?
- How will you continue this journey?
- What journey are you on?

Supplementary Text: *What is the Most Beautiful Thing You Know About Horses?*

How does this picture book (*What is the Most Beautiful Thing You Know About Horses?* by Richard Van Camp [[read aloud via YouTube](#)]) connect to *The Barren Grounds*? How does Van Camp explore identity in this book? This could be done in a comparison list or a Venn diagram. Have students do some writing about the last line of the book – “What's the most beautiful thing about horses? What's the most beautiful thing about you?”

Literature Focus

Discussion Questions* (Whole Class/Small Group/Pairs)

*The first two discussion questions are from [Tundra Books' *The Barren Grounds* Educator Guide](#).

- * Why does connecting to and learning to live off the land become so important to Eli and eventually Morgan as well?
- * Identity and knowing who you are is something that Morgan struggles with throughout the novel. What kinds of things make up and impact your identity? What has disrupted Morgan's sense of identity? How does this lack of identity affect how Morgan interacts in the world?
- * Fictional texts can have a variety of structures, including a story within a story. Why do you think the author chose to use this structure in *The Barren Grounds*? What effect does this have on the reader?
- * Who (or what) is the antagonist in this story? Explain.

Annotate Morgan's Poem

Morgan writes a poem for her English class (see appendix); take some time to interpret her words.

- * Focus on the many meanings (could one line mean more than one thing?)
- * Identify powerful phrases and keywords.

- * Most of the poem is in past tense, but the last two lines are in present tense. How does the verb tense impact the meaning? Try changing the tense of some of the verbs. Does the poem still make sense? Is the meaning different?
- * Illustrate the poem.

Creative Writing: Inspired by Morgan

Students will write a poem about a place that is special to them, using Morgan's poem (see appendix) as a mentor text. Teachers may wish to guide students' thinking and idea generation with 5 Senses brainstorming and/or stretching initial ideas with figurative language (simile, metaphor, etc). After they have gone through the writing process, and they are ready to share the poem, students will select the most appropriate method to print their poem. They may choose to print, keyboard or use cursive writing.

Students will attach a reflection to their piece, explaining why they have chosen a particular way to share their poem and how the sharing method reflects the content of the poem.

Creative Writing: 'I am from' Poem

Have students write an 'I am from' poem, inspired by George Ella Lyon's [Where I'm From](#). Have students do 1 min brainstorms/ quick writes for each of these categories: items found in their childhood home; products or objects from the past; describing words of your childhood home; plants/trees/natural items from your lifetime; family traits or tendencies; fun memories; foods your family likes to eat; important events from life of ancestor(s). The template (see appendix) can help students sort their ideas to generate a rough draft of their poem; they will not use all of their ideas in the poem. Students will need to select the best ones from each category.

Coming Soon to Theatres

From [Tundra Books' The Barren Grounds Educator Guide](#).

Imagine that *The Barren Grounds* is turned into a movie. In small groups, have students create movie posters that theaters would use to advertise. (Online software like Canva would be a great place for students to build these.) Who would the students choose (which actresses/actors) to play Morgan and Eli? What imagery

and words/ phrases would they include on the poster to entice viewers without giving away the story? How would they honor the Cree culture within the movie and on the poster? What font and colour choices would be appropriate for the text?

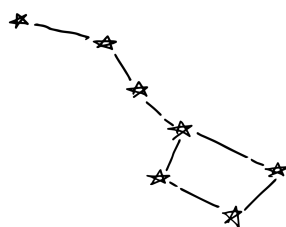
Map Art

Take the map of *The Barren Grounds* (found at the beginning of the book) and create representations over the map to portray how place is connected to memory. It may be helpful to enlarge on paper to make space for student thinking. Be mindful of colours, words, and symbols you could use to represent learning.

Word Inquiry

Teacher Notes – You will help students uncover/discover information about these words. These words are simply suggestions. Please select words that work best for your students. Your role is to guide and discover alongside them. Do not give them the notes directly.

Page	Word	Sentence
227	constellation	His constellation was bright and clear through the trees, and always directly over them, watching protectively.
	con+stell+ate+ion <i>con</i> "together, with" + <i>stellare</i> "to shine", <i>stella</i> "star" Visit the Word Searcher tool to discover other words that share this base.	
230	intimidating	The Barren Grounds weren't as intimidating now that the White Time had ended.
	What is the base of this word? What are the affixes? What words are part of this word family? Brainstorm a list and write them as word sums. What do each of the morphemes mean or give the sense of? Does the history of this word help us further understand its current spelling or help us discover other words in the family? in+timid+ate+ing	



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Print Resources

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Digital Resources

[Empowering the Spirit: Educational Resource to Support Reconciliation](#)

[First Peoples Principles of Learning Poster](#)

[Tundra Books The Barren Grounds Educator Guide](#)

[Walking Together: First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum](#)

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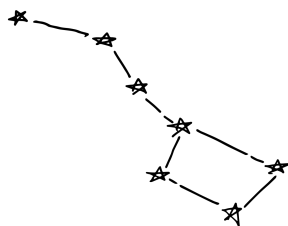
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APPENDIX



Examine characters based on what they say, think, or do
or what others say and think about them



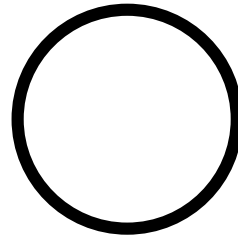
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SELF

OTHERS

THINK

THINK



CHARACTER'S NAME

SAY

SAY

DO

SAMPLE CHARACTER TRAITS (BEYOND APPEARANCE) ACTIVE ADVENTUROUS AFRAID AGGRESSIVE ANGRY ARTISTIC BOLD BOSSY BRAVE BRILLIANT CALM CAREFUL CARING CAUTIOUS CHARMING CHEERFUL CLUMSY CONFIDENT CONFUSED COOPERATIVE CREATIVE CRUEL CURIOUS DARING DEMANDING DEPENDABLE DETERMINED DISHONEST DISRESPECTFUL DULL ENCOURAGING ENERGETIC FAIR FRIENDLY FUN FUNNY GENEROUS GENTLE GLOOMY GREEDY HAPPY HELPFUL HEROIC HONEST HOPEFUL HUMBLE IMAGINATIVE IMMATURE IMPATIENT INDEPENDENT INTELLIGENT JELOUS KIND LAZY LOGICAL LONELY LOUD LOVING LOYAL LUCKY MATURE MEAN MISCHIEVOUS MYSTERIOUS NERVOUS NICE NOISEY NOSEY OBNOXIOUS OPTIMISTIC ORGANIZED OUTGOING PATIENT PEACEFUL PERSUASIVE PLAYFUL POLITE POPULAR PROUD PROTECTIVE QUIET RELAXED RESPECTFUL RESPONSIBLE RESOURCEFUL RUDE SAD SELFISH SENSITIVE SERIOUS SHY SILLY SMART SNEAKY SPOILED SUCCESSFUL SWEET TALENTED TALKATIVE THOUGHTFUL TIMID TOLERANT TRUSTWORTHY UNKIND WARM WILD WISE WITHDRAWN WITTY

Examine characters based on what they say, think, or do
or what others say and think about them



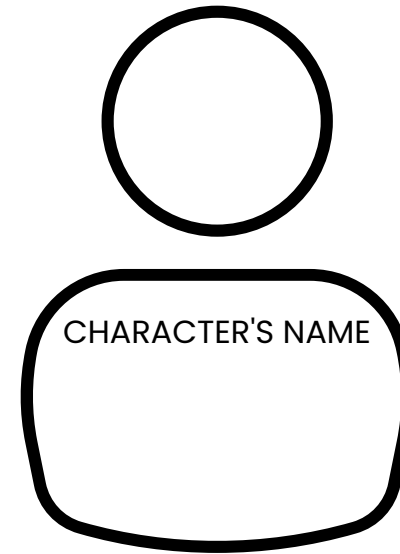
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SELF
OTHERS

THINK

THINK

SAY

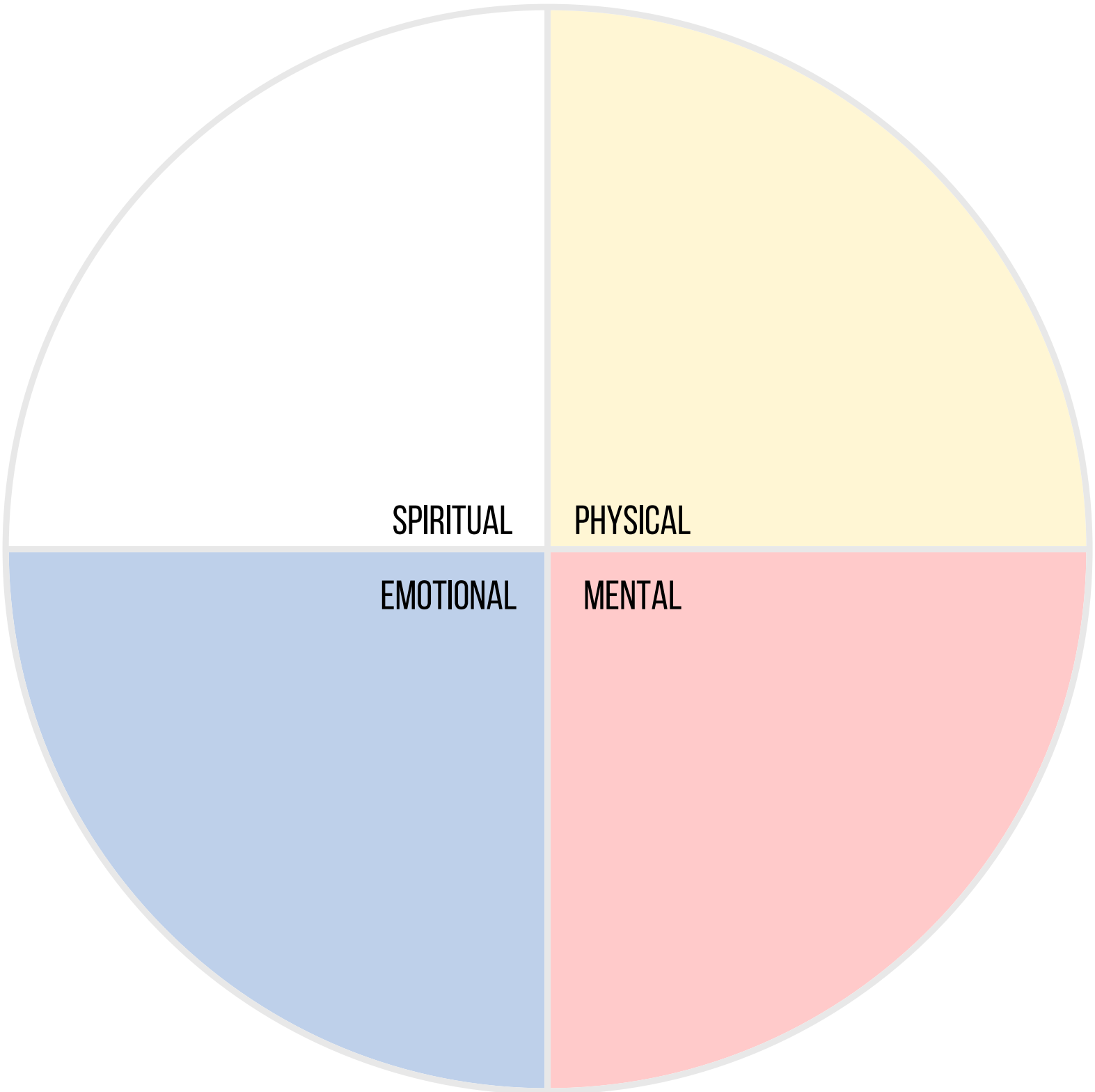


DO

SAY

SAMPLE CHARACTER TRAITS (BEYOND APPEARANCE) ACTIVE ADVENTUROUS AFRAID AGGRESSIVE ANGRY ARTISTIC BOLD BOSSY BRAVE BRILLIANT CALM CAREFUL CARING CAUTIOUS CHARMING CHEERFUL CLUMSY CONFIDENT CONFUSED COOPERATIVE CREATIVE CRUEL CURIOUS DARING DEMANDING DEPENDABLE DETERMINED DISHONEST DISRESPECTFUL DULL ENCOURAGING ENERGETIC FAIR FRIENDLY FUN FUNNY GENEROUS GENTLE GLOOMY GREEDY HAPPY HELPFUL HEROIC HONEST HOPEFUL HUMBLE IMAGINATIVE IMMATURE IMPATIENT INDEPENDENT INTELLIGENT JELOUS KIND LAZY LOGICAL LONELY LOUD LOVING LOYAL LUCKY MATURE MEAN MISCHIEVOUS MYSTERIOUS NERVOUS NICE NOISEY NOSEY OBNOXIOUS OPTIMISTIC ORGANIZED OUTGOING PATIENT PEACEFUL PERSUASIVE PLAYFUL POLITE POPULAR PROUD PROTECTIVE QUIET RELAXED RESPECTFUL RESPONSIBLE RESOURCEFUL RUDE SAD SELFISH SENSITIVE SERIOUS SHY SILLY SMART SNEAKY SPOILED SUCCESSFUL SWEET TALENTED TALKATIVE THOUGHTFUL TIMID TOLERANT TRUSTWORTHY UNKIND WARM WILD WISE WITHDRAWN WITTY

MEDICINE WHEEL THINKING



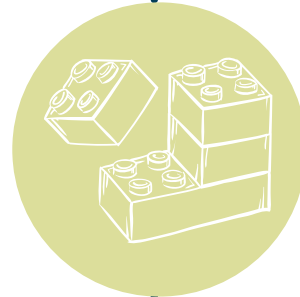
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WORD INQUIRY



PICK A WORD.

What does this word mean?



HOW IS IT BUILT?

*Box the base and underline the affix(es).
Write a word sum.*



FIND THE FAMILY

What words are part of this word family?



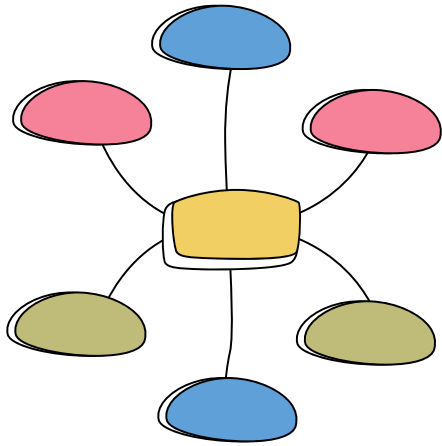
WHAT'S THE STORY?

*What is the story behind the spelling of
this word? How do the letters function?*

Hypothesize a Word Sum



How do you think the word is built?



What other words share your hypothesized base and/or affixes?



Do you need to revise your hypothesis?



Investigate and share your discovery.

As you explore these quotes from Elder Wilfred Buck, consider:

What are some key words?

What are some powerful phrases?

What are the sentences or phrases that teach you something new?

"We arrive at knowledge from many different paths and the more aware we are of other possibilities, the more sensitive we will be to understanding and difference."

Buck, Wilfred. Atchakosuk: Ininewuk Stories of the Stars

"All cultures on Mother Earth have their own understandings of the stars. No matter where one was located on Earth, all one must do was look up into an evening sky and a myriad of stories can be revealed. As human beings made sense of their world and established a sense of belonging, stories were told and connections between people and the environment were established."

Buck, Wilfred. Atchakosuk: Ininewuk Stories of the Stars

"We as individuals tend to view our civilization as "the best" and when our teachings, knowledge, and belief systems are ridiculed, marginalized and then utterly dismissed as "quaint", we begin to question our world view. This has happened and is still happening to First Nations people as well as all colonized peoples. Until other worldviews are proposed and considered, there will be a distinct "difference" and "quaintness" about all that is not mainstream. In addition, our children will see these differences and attempt to discard them in order to become more mainstream. These teachings reflect the differences and propose another perspective, broadening and giving voice to them."

Buck, Wilfred. Atchakosuk: Ininewuk Stories of the Stars

"I hope to see a day where Anishinabe, Dene, Ojibwe, Inuit, Lakota, Inuit and all other marginalized peoples hold their stories and relationships to the stars in plain view for their children and all the world to see. First Nations astronomy can be just as relevant as that associated with Roman or Greek mythology and makes people aware of the quality and quantity of knowledge that has been overlooked in Canada."

Buck, Wilfred. Atchakosuk: Inuit Stories of the Stars

"We are told by various Elders and Knowledge Keepers, there are untold numbers of stories about the stars and skies and slowly they will reveal themselves."

Buck, Wilfred. Atchakosuk: Ininewuk Stories of the Stars

The Legend of the Fisher, or Ochek

As told by Wilfred Buck, Science Specialist, Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre

A long time ago, there was no summer in the north country. It was winter all the time. Cold and bitter winds rushed through the lands and the beautiful colours of nature were only a dream. It hadn't always been this way, but there was once a man who captured all the little summer birds. He tied them in a bundle and they were always with him and Herring. This is why there was winter all the time.

The animals in the north country knew that summer existed somewhere, even though it never came to them. They wanted summer. They were tired of the cold. One day, Squirrel discovered where the birds had been taken, and the animals decided that one of them must go and free the summer birds. They chose Fisher, and off he went.

He walked and walked until he had left the north country. He walked and walked until he reached the wigwam where the captor and Herring lived.

When Fisher went inside, he found the man was gone but Herring was there. Quickly, Fisher put some sap around Herring's mouth so that he couldn't call out to the man. Once Herring was captured, Fisher used his teeth and tore open the prison that held the summer birds captive. As the summer birds made their way out of the wigwam, Herring broke free from the sap and called out, "Fisher broke the summer birds out! Fisher used his teeth! The summer birds are free!"

The man came running, but as he arrived at the wigwam, Fisher and the summer birds were already far away. The man chased after Fisher with a bow and arrow, and shot many times at him. But Fisher jumped into the sky and climbed up higher and higher and higher, right to the stars.

All the man could do was shoot Fisher's tail. Fisher escaped into the sky, and that is where we see him now.

His broken tail can still be seen today as the bent handle of the Big Dipper constellation.

Source: <https://mfnerc.org/newsletter/under-a-blanket-of-stars/>

BLM 2 – Beliefs and Values about Children

from the Public Health Agency of Canada, Aboriginal Head Start
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/publications/ahsuni-papairun/index-eng.php#a6

While First Nations people, Métis, and Inuit have distinct cultures and languages, they also share common beliefs, values and histories. It is with this in mind that the following Statement of Beliefs and Values about Children was written.

We believe...

- That children are a gift from the Creator.
- That our children have a right to live proudly as Aboriginal people in the lands of their ancestors.
- That children have a right to learn their respective Aboriginal language(s) and histories, and adults have a responsibility to pass on the instructions that the Creator gave in the beginning of time as are reflected in our languages, cultural beliefs and cultural practices.
- That each child is part of what makes a community whole.
- That it is essential for children to develop meaningful relationships with Elders, the carriers of knowledge and history.
- That children, under the guidance of Elders, will learn to love learning throughout their life.
- That adults are community role models who are to teach children how to live a good life.
- That children deserve opportunities to gain knowledge and experience of how to live a good life.
- That children acquire knowledge by watching, listening and doing, and adults are responsible for encouraging and guiding them in all those activities.
- That children, through being loved, valued and encouraged, will gain the courage, the strength and the wisdom to use the power of a good mind and spirit in all that they do.
- That children have a right to enjoy the opportunities that education offers.
- That children have a right to live in healthy, self-determining communities that are free of violence.

The iceberg concept of culture

Surface Culture

Above sea level

Emotional level: relatively low

food • dress • music
visual arts • drama • crafts
dance • literature • language
celebrations • games

Deep Culture

Unspoken Rules

Partially below sea level

Emotional level: very high

courtesy • contextual conversational patterns • concept of time
personal space • rules of conduct • facial expressions
nonverbal communication • body language • touching • eye contact
patterns of handling emotions • notions of modesty • concept of beauty
courtship practices • relationships to animals • notions of leadership
tempo of work • concepts of food • ideals of childrearing
theory of disease • social interaction rate • nature of friendships
tone of voice • attitudes toward elders • concept of cleanliness
notions of adolescence • patterns of group decision-making
definition of insanity • preference for competition or cooperation
tolerance of physical pain • concept of “self” • concept of past and future
definition of obscenity • attitudes toward dependents • problem-solving
roles in relation to age, sex, class, occupation, kinship, and so forth

Unconscious Rules

Completely below
sea level

Emotional level:
intense

The iceberg concept of culture

Surface Culture

Above sea level

Emotional level: relatively low

Deep Culture

Unspoken Rules

Partially below sea level

Emotional level: very high

Unconscious Rules

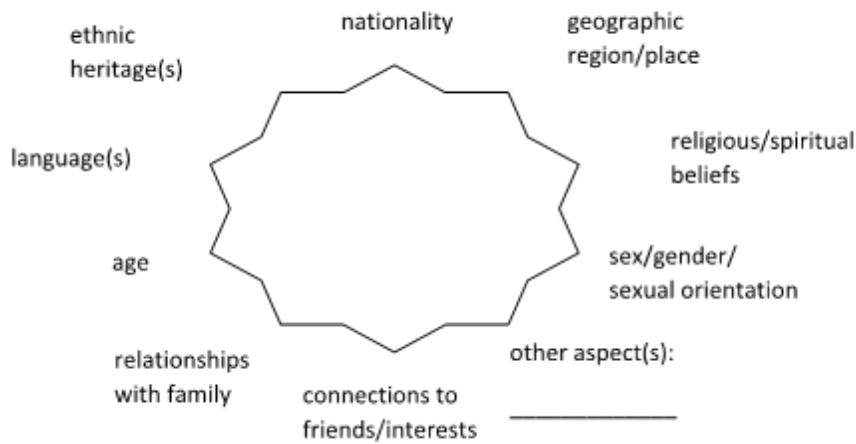
Completely below sea level

Emotional level:
intense

BLM 1 – Identity Map

Name: _____

Use the following graphic organizer to examine the different aspects of your life that help create your own personal/cultural identity.



Personal Strengths and Abilities

What are my strengths and abilities?

How do I use my strengths and abilities in my family, relationships, and communities?

The MENU OF NOTEBOOK RESPONSES

KEYWORD SUMMARY

After you have read the section, identify 3 key words that help you remember the most important events or ideas. Using those three words, write a summary of the section.

TRACKING FEELINGS

Track one of the character's feelings throughout the section. Note what is causing the feelings. Use direct quotes from the text when possible.

SOCIOGRAM

A sociogram is a visual representation of relationships between characters. Draw a circle for each character and write a sentence along the line that connects them. You may wish to draw the circle sizes depending on the importance of the character to the section/story.

WHO-WHAT-WHY

Who was the most important character in this section? Retell what this character did in the section and explain why they took those actions.

SWAMPY CREE GLOSSARY AND PRONUNCIATION GUIDE FOR THE BARREN
GROUNDS

Sounds:

É – ay

Í – ee

I – ih

A – ah

O – oh

E – eh

Amisk ah-misk: beaver

Api ah-pih: sit

Askí Ah-skee: earth, ground

Astum ah-stum: come

Awah ah-wahs: go away

Ehe eh-heh: yes

Ekosani Eh-koh-sah-nih: thank you

Iskwésis ih-skway-sis: girl

Kayas kah-yas: long ago

Kihiw kih-ewe: eagle

Kisémanitou kih-say-man-ih-too: Creator

Kiskisitotaso kih-skih-sih-toh-tah-so: don't forget about who you are

Mahihkan mah-hih-kahn: wolf

Miskinahk miss-kih-nack: turtle

Mistapew miss-ta-pay-oh: big foot (giant)

Moshom moo-shum: grandfather

Muskwa muh-skwa: bear

Mwach mwa-ch: no

Napéw nah-pay-oo: man

Ochek oh-check: Fisher

Ochekatchakosuk oh-check-at-chack-oh-suck: fisher stars

Oho oh-ho: owl

Pimíhkán pih-mee-kaan: pemmican

Pinésisak pih-nay-sis-ack: bird

Pisikiw pih-sis-koo: animal

Pisiskowak pih-sis-koh-wack: animals

Sisipak see-see-pack: ducks

Tahtakiw tah-ta-koo: sandhill crane

Tansi tan-sih: hello

Wapos wah-puss: rabbit

Blackline Master 9

The Land is Important Because...

Think about why the land is important.
Finish these sentences.

The Land is important because it gives us

The Land is important because it helps us to

The Land is important because it makes me feel.....

The Land is important because it connects me with

The Land is important because it protects

Blackline Master 10

First Nations Laws and the Land

First Nations had governments in the past.
They have governments today.
First Nations have always had governments.

They follow traditional laws.
The laws were followed in the past.
They are still followed today.
The laws are unwritten.
They are passed down orally.

The laws tell how to take care of the land.
They tell how to treat animals.
They tell how to treat each other.

Here are some laws about the land:

- Thank the plants and animals when you take them.
- Only take what you need.
- Share your food with others.
- Only take food from your own land.

Blackline Master 11

Traditional Governments

First Nations people have always governed themselves. Each First Nation has its own way of organizing.

Leaders are often called Chiefs in English. There are special words for leaders in every First Nations language. What is the name for “Chief” or “leader” where you live?

How are leaders picked?

Sometimes the new Chief is born into the role. This is called a **hereditary** leader. Some First Nations follow the mother’s side of the family. Other First Nations follow the father’s side of the family.

Sometimes everyone in the community picks the new Chief. They all agree on who is best to be the leader. This is called **consensus**.

Chiefs have people who help them make decisions. These people make a council. The council has Elders, family leaders, and Clan leaders.

Often First Nations had feasts and potlatches. They were very important for First Nations government. Everyone could see, hear and remember the business that took place in the feast hall.

Blackline Master 13

First Nations Governments

Today many First Nations have more than one system of government. There are traditional governments and there are elected governments. They are two different ways of looking after the community.

Traditional Governments

Traditional governments are the governments of First Nations' ancestors. These governments took care of First Nations people for thousands of years.

The traditional leaders are often called Chiefs in English. Each community has a name for leaders in their own language.

In some First Nations leaders are hereditary. That means a new Chief is related to the old Chief's family. In the past, chiefs were often men.

Some First Nations hereditary systems follow the mother's side of the family. This is called matrilineal.

Other First Nations follow the father's side of the family. This is called patrilineal.

Some First Nations have other ways of choosing their traditional leaders. In these First Nations the people pick their leaders. They all agree on who is best to be the leader. This is called consensus.

Some traditional governments have councils who help make decisions. The council is made up of leaders and Elders from families and Clans in the community.

Important acts of First Nations government take place at public ceremonies where guests witness and approve the business that takes place. These are sometimes called feasts or potlatches. However, every First Nation has words in its language for these public ceremonies.

Elected Government

Elected First Nations governments started after Canada became a country. The Indian Act forced First Nations to make a new type of government. All First Nations had to have the same form of government, called a Band Council. Today many First Nations still operate under Band Councils.

Band members vote on who will be their Chief and Council. The Chief Councillor is the leader of the Band Council. Chief and Council make decisions for the community.

Some First Nations have a newer kind of government. These are Nations who have signed a treaty or a self-government agreement with Canada and British Columbia governments.

In treaty governments, the leaders are elected.

Working Together

The traditional leaders and the elected leaders often work together to govern their community. Together they look after the people. They look after the land in their traditional territory.

They keep their cultures and languages alive. They bring jobs to the community. They fix the roads. They look after the water that people drink.

They make sure their people stay healthy.

Blackline Master 30

Consensus Activity

In some traditional government systems, consensus was used to make decisions. That means everyone in the group had to agree on the decision.

In a meeting, Chiefs, Elders and other leaders would share their thinking. People didn't vote. They kept talking until the group could come up with a decision that everyone could agree upon.

You are going to try out the consensus model.

Your group is going to sit in a circle and one student will be asked to be the speaker. The speaker shares the decision that needs to be made and starts the conversation. Only one person speaks at a time. Once you have spoken, you cannot speak again until the circle returns to you. This means there are no rebuttals. There is no cross talk. You cannot speak until it is your turn, which means you have to be actively listening.

All thoughts and ideas that shared are to be respected. You do not name someone in the circle. For example, if a person liked an idea that someone shared, they might say, "An idea was shared that I think would help our community." If an idea is shared that you don't agree with, you could say "an idea was shared and I am wondering if we should think more about what the consequences might be."

Topic:

Your class is studying life cycles in science and your teacher wants the class to go on a field trip. He has a few ideas and wants the classroom to make a decision.

- The first idea is to go to the Salmon Fish Hatchery.
- The second idea is to go on a nature walk and invite an Elder to guide the class.
- The third idea is to go on a virtual field trip. For the virtual field trip, a scientist from Haida Gwaii would talk about sustainable fishing practices. The class would get to connect with her via Skype.

In your group, discuss which field trip would work best for everyone. After you have all shared ideas, come to a consensus decision. That is, make a decision as a whole group that everyone agrees on.

CSI: COLOUR, SYMBOL, IMAGE

Select one of the sets of questions related to the journeys in the novel.
For your responses you will select one CSI for each. You will need to explain your choices.

For one of these, **choose a color** that you feel best represents or captures the essence of that idea.
For another one, **choose a symbol** that you feel best represents or captures the essence of that idea.
For the other one, **choose an image** that you feel best represents or captures the essence of that idea

COLOUR

SYMBOL

IMAGE

Morgan's poem for Mrs. Edward's English class after her return from the Barren Grounds, pg 247

On the Barren Grounds

It took sinking under blinding white

To emerge another me

Somebody I forgot I was

Someone I could never see.

It took facing my worst fears

Stepping out into the night

To find that I was brave enough

Before I found the light.

It took me going far away

To feel this close to you

It took dreaming of a memory

To change what I thought I knew.

It took stars within the sky

To guide my way back home

That I'll always know the way

Wherever I might roam.

Where I'm From

I am from _____
(a specific item from your childhood home)

from _____
(two products or objects from your past)

I am from _____
(a phrase describing your childhood home)

and _____
(more description of your childhood home)

I am from _____
(a plant, tree or natural item from your past)

whose _____
(personify that natural item)

I am from _____
(two objects from your past)

from _____ and _____
(a family name) (another family name)

I am from _____ and _____
(a family trait or tendency) (another family trait or tendency)

and from _____
(another family trait, habit or tendency)

from _____
(another family trait, habit or tendency)

I am from _____
(a religious phrase or memory)

I am from _____ and _____
(an ancestor) (another ancestor)

from _____
(two foods from your family history)

from _____
(a specific event in the life of an ancestor)

and from _____
(another detail from the life of an ancestor)

(a memory or object you had as a child)

I am from those moments _____

(conclude by finishing this thought or by repeating a line or idea from earlier in the poem)

Curricular Connections

The following pages include alignment of the activities and suggestions from this unit plan to the Grade 6 KUSPs. KUSPs that are connected to the listed activities are written in **blue** text. Teachers will need to determine to what extent they have explored the KUSPs as everything offered in this document is a suggestion.

Following these pages are several assessment structures that teachers can use. Docx versions of these can be found on [our website](#) (search *The Barren Grounds*).

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Text Forms and Structures</p> <p>Knowledge Texts can have more than one purpose and may have one that stands out.</p> <p>Reading a variety of texts for enjoyment can support academic development.</p> <p>Literary texts can be categorized by genre, including fiction and nonfiction.</p> <p>Literary text forms can be digital or non-digital and includes articles, speeches, and hybrids</p> <p>Narrative texts can be fiction or non-fiction and can be structured in a</p> <p>Understanding Text genres, forms, and structures can enhance and influence the enjoyment and communication of ideas and information.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Analyze the purpose of a variety of digital or non-digital texts.</p> <p>Categorize a variety of texts according to genre.</p> <p>Examine the form and structure of a variety of literary texts.</p> <p>Make connections between texts read for enjoyment and academic development</p>	<p><i>Examine form and structure:</i> Section 6: Literature Focus 'Annotate Morgan's Poem'</p> <p><i>Make connections:</i> Section 6: Indigenous Worldviews & Perspectives Focus 'Supplementary Text: <i>What is the Most Beautiful Thing About Horses?</i>'</p> <p>Section 2: Indigenous Worldviews & Perspectives Focus 'Supplementary Text: <i>Treaty Words</i>'</p> <p>Section 3: Indigenous Worldviews & Perspectives Focus 'Supplementary Text: <i>On the Trampoline</i>'</p>	<p>Exit Slip or Journal Entry (after reading supplementary texts): What is the purpose of this text? Is there more than one? Explain your answer. Are these purposes similar or different than Robertson's in <i>The Barren Grounds</i>? Explain.</p>
<p>Learning Outcome Students analyze how text form and structure clarify information and support connecting with self, others, and the world.</p> <p>Knowledge Text features can be digital or non-digital and can organize and present important content, enhance comprehension of content, and expand vocabulary</p> <p>Understanding Text features are used to navigate, enhance, or create complex information in an efficient manner.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Examine a variety of text features that organize content, identify important information, and enhance understandings of texts.</p> <p>Include a variety of text features to help organize content, identify important information, and enhance personal expression.</p>	<p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'Map Art'</p>	<p>Exit Slip or Journal Entry: Why did the author choose to include the text feature of a map at the beginning of the novel?</p>
<p>Knowledge Fiction sub-genres include traditional literature and comedy.</p> <p>Comedic text is amusing in tone and often has a cheerful ending.</p> <p>Fictional texts can have a variety of structures, including a story within a story.</p> <p>Elements of fiction include conflict, which is a struggle between individuals, groups, or forces that prevents the protagonist from achieving a goal.</p> <p>Types of characters include stock, protagonist, antagonist.</p> <p>A stock character is a stereotypical figure who is recognized from familiar literature and traditions.</p> <p>A protagonist is the main character at the centre of a story who makes decisions, deals with consequences, and faces obstacles.</p>	<p><i>Characters</i> Teaching Strategies: Character Development Activity Section 1: Literature Focus 'Predict' Section 6: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Community as Character' Section 6: Literature Focus 'Discussion Questions'</p> <p><i>Story in a Story</i> Section 6: Literature Focus 'Discussion Questions'</p>	<p>Character Development Activity Guide to Success</p>

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Understanding Engaging with fictional texts can develop empathy and inspire creativity.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Examine mentor texts to deepen understandings of fiction sub-genres.</p> <p>Examine a variety of fictional text structures, including a story within a story.</p> <p>Examine elements within a variety of fictional texts, including conflict.</p> <p>Examine characters based on what they say, think, or do or what others say and think about them.</p> <p>Describe the protagonist and antagonist in a variety of fictional texts.</p>	<p><i>Conflict</i></p> <p>Section 5: Literature Focus 'Conflict'</p>	
<p>Knowledge Human-made structures of land convey meaning, such as First Nations pictographs, First Nations petroglyphs, Inuit inuksuit, Métis lobstersticks, Coastal First Nations totem poles, Pyramids (Egyptian and Mesoamerican), Stonehenge, Neolithic burial mounds, Cave paintings at Lascaux and Chauvet, or Mesopotamian dams and dikes.</p> <p>Land is a text that can be read for multiple meanings and understandings.</p> <p>Understanding Land literacy can be enhanced through examining human-made structures of land.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Describe how meaning is conveyed through human-made structures of land by First Nations, Métis, or Inuit and peoples from other parts of the world.</p>	<p>Section 1: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Land-Place Based: Understanding the Setting'</p> <p>Section 2: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Supplementary Text: Treaty Words'</p> <p>Section 2: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Land-Place Based: Relationship to Land'</p> <p>Section 3: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'The Calendar'</p>	
<p>Knowledge Poetic structures include ballads, poems, or songs narrating stories in short stanzas.</p> <p>Understanding Poetry can be explored to build a foundation of cultural knowledge and asense of historical continuity.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Listen to, recite, or sing poetry. Analyze figurative language that can develop empathy and inspire creativity. Investigate poetic structures that contribute to creative expression of ideas, including ballads. Experiment with creating poetry of various structures.</p>	<p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'Creative Writing: Inspired by Morgan'</p> <p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'Creative Writing: 'I am from' Poem'</p>	<p>"I Am From" Assessment</p>

		Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Learning Outcome Students connect the quality and efficacy of oral communication to oral language skills.</p>	<p>Oral Language</p> <p>Knowledge Oral communication can be enhanced through use of protocols that support respectful relationships.</p> <p>First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communication processes and protocols can preserve shared knowledge and include practices such as ongoing conversations, sharing circles, respectfully acknowledging all voices, waiting to take turns, active listening, focusing on the idea rather than on who gave the idea, or ending with consensus</p> <p>Understanding Oral traditions can enhance relationships and preserve shared knowledge.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Reflect on how oral communication processes or protocols can enhance the quality of personal relationships.</p> <p>Examine communication processes and protocols that contribute to the transmission or preservation of knowledge.</p>	<p>Teaching Strategies: Talking Circles</p> <p>Section 4: Literature Focus 'Practice Active Listening'</p> <p>Section 5: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Consensus Activity'</p>	<p>Exit Slip or Journal Entry: In what ways do oral communication processes (like <i>Talking Circles</i> or <i>Think, Pair, Share</i> or <i>Say Something</i>) enhance the conversation and help build relationships with others?</p>
	<p>Knowledge Collaborative dialogue can empower individuals or groups to voice ideas, express understandings, consider a variety of perspectives, and examine new ways of thinking</p> <p>Collaborative dialogue can be used as a process to solve problems and generate innovative ideas.</p> <p>Collaborative dialogue can increase individual or group confidence through the development of trust and the building of relationships.</p> <p>Respectful language and humour can advance collaborative dialogue.</p> <p>Understanding Collaborative dialogue can be used to expand ideas and deepen understandings of self, others, and the world.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Offer relevant information and logical reasoning to enhance collaborative dialogue.</p> <p>Consider varied perspectives or opinions when collaborating.</p> <p>Reflect on and share new, expanded, or adjusted learnings resulting from collaborative dialogue.</p>	<p>Teaching Strategies: Say Something</p> <p>Teaching Strategies: Talking Circle</p>	<p>"Say Something" Guide to Success</p>

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p style="text-align: center;">Vocabulary</p> <p>Knowledge The English language has been influenced by people, places, and events in history.</p> <p>Vocabulary is contextual and influenced by emerging or changing conditions, including technology.</p> <p>Many words with Greek or Latin roots are still in use today.</p> <p>Words that are specific to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit languages can be found in the people, places, and things that surround us.</p> <p>Many words in the English language have French origins.</p> <p>Suffixes, including <en> and <ize>, change the meaning of a word when applied to a base.</p> <p>Understanding Word origins and morphemes can reflect the past and influence how we understand the present.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Examine the historical origins of words in the English language.</p> <p>Examine words with meanings that have changed over time.</p> <p>Research the meaning of words with Greek or Latin roots that are still in use today.</p> <p>Study the origin and meaning of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit words in local environments.</p> <p>Examine words in the English language that have French origins.</p> <p>Examine words or sayings that are new to the English language and are based on recent innovations or changes in society.</p> <p>Analyze how adding affixes changes the meaning of words.</p> <p>Knowledge Figurative language is language that has non-literal or figurative meanings and includes palindromes.</p> <p>A palindrome is a word or phrase that reads the same backward and forward (e.g., radar).</p> <p>Understanding Precise vocabulary leads to engaging, clear, concise, and intentional communication.</p>	<p>Teaching Strategies: Indigenous Language Exploration and Honouring</p> <p>Teaching Strategies: Word Inquiry</p> <p>Sections 1, 2, 3: Indigenous Worldviews & Perspectives Focus 'Language'</p> <p>Section 2: Indigenous Worldviews & Perspectives Focus 'Exploring Place and Personal Names'</p> <p>Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6: Literature Focus 'Word Inquiry'</p>	<p>Morphology Assessment</p> <p>Morphology Student Self Assessment</p>
<p>Learning Outcome Students evaluate how vocabulary enhances communication and provides clarity.</p>	<p>Analyze figurative language Section 1: Literature Focus 'Simile'</p> <p>Section 1: Literature Focus 'Allusion'</p>	

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Skills and Procedures</p> <p>Use similes, metaphors, and analogies to compare words or clarify word meanings.</p> <p>Analyze the meanings of words or phrases expressed figuratively.</p> <p>Apply tier 2 words across subjects to enhance precise communication.</p> <p>Apply tier 3 words in subject-specific contexts.</p>	<p>Section 4: Literature Focus 'Hyperbole'</p> <p><i>Apply Tier 2 Words</i></p> <p>Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6: Literature Focus 'Discussion Questions'</p>	

		Activities and Routines	Assessments
Learning Outcome Students interpret and respond to texts through application of comprehension strategies.	Comprehension Knowledge Comprehension strategies can be used to interpret and respond to increasingly complex texts and include predicting, inferring, making connections, summarizing, synthesizing, and evaluating Self-monitoring skills can support comprehension and interpretation of texts read independently.	Teaching Strategies: Sketch-Noting, Doodling, Word Collecting, etc Section 1: Literature Focus 'Notebook Responses' Section 5: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'All My Relations'	
	Understanding Comprehension, interpretation, and management of information from increasingly complex texts are enhanced through application of a variety of critical thinking strategies and skills.		
	Skills and Procedures Incorporate a variety of strategies to comprehend, interpret, and manage information from texts. Evaluate the effectiveness of comprehension strategies used to interpret texts read independently. Apply a variety of self-monitoring skills to comprehend and interpret texts.		
	Knowledge Making text to self, text to text, and text to world connections can support analyzing, summarizing, and synthesizing texts.	Opening Activity: Looking at the Stars Section 1: Literature Focus 'Notebook Responses' Section 6: Literature Focus 'Discussion Questions' Section 6: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Supplementary Text: <i>What is the most beautiful thing about horses?</i> '	
	Analyzing texts includes reading closely to examine ideas and information in texts separately and in relationship to each other.		
	Understanding Comprehension of texts includes analyzing, summarizing, and synthesizing information and ideas.		
	Skills and Procedures Respond to texts by summarizing main ideas and providing supporting evidence from the texts. Make connections between new ideas and information in texts and known ideas and information. Analyze ideas and information to support comprehension and interpretation of texts. Synthesize ideas and information in texts to confirm or expand understandings.		
	Knowledge Conclusions can be judgements reached based on information that is stated in or inferred from texts. Context clues in texts include words, phrases, punctuation, dialogue, and information in pictures, diagrams, charts, or graphs	Teaching Strategies: Character Development Opening Activity: Looking at the Stars Section 1: Literature Focus 'Discussion Questions'	
	Understanding Comprehension and interpretation of texts requires attention to explicit and implicit contextual information and ideas.		

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Skills and Procedures Revise or confirm predictions based on new or additional information and sources.</p> <p>Infer meanings from texts based on context clues.</p> <p>Interpret and draw conclusions from texts using stated and implied ideas or information.</p> <p>Distinguish between information that is stated and inferred.</p> <p>Analyze ideas and information using text evidence.</p>	<p>Revisit predictions from Section 1: Literature Focus 'Predict'</p> <p>Section 5: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Constellation'</p> <p>Section 6: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Circling Back'</p>	
<p>Knowledge Perspectives can evolve for a variety of reasons, including passage of time, experience, context, and new information</p> <p>Critical thinking involves considering the thoughts and experiences of others to develop empathy.</p> <p>Authors can explicitly and implicitly share perspectives through text creation.</p> <p>Bias is the favouring of one thing, person, or group over another, usually in a way that is considered to be unfair.</p> <p>Understanding Interaction with texts can deepen comprehension, expand perspectives, and help readers learn more about themselves and the world.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Connect perspectives reflected in texts to personal experiences.</p> <p>Analyze factors that cause characters in texts to change their perspectives.</p> <p>Compare personal perspectives to varied perspectives found in texts.</p> <p>Select the information needed to support a perspective.</p> <p>Share how considering differences in perspectives can develop empathy.</p> <p>Consider whether an author or a text creator presents information with or without bias.</p>	<p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'CSI: The Journey'</p>	<p>Colour Symbol Image Assessment</p>

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Knowledge Texts are situated in and can be influenced by specific historical, social, and cultural contexts.</p> <p>Specific historical and social contexts influence understandings of text.</p> <p>Historical contexts include time and place.</p> <p>Social contexts include beliefs.</p> <p>Contexts can change and affect how texts are understood.</p> <p>Artifacts as texts can provide insights into contexts of people, time, or place.</p> <p>Authors or text creators may present information to deliberately influence an audience's beliefs, perspectives, values, or understandings, such as advertising or social media.</p> <p>Understanding Historical, social, and cultural contexts can support readers in examining influences on texts.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Analyze texts to determine contextual information that supports how a text can be understood.</p> <p>Examine information in a text that implies or confirms that the context has changed.</p> <p>Examine changes in context that affect actions, behaviours, or feelings of characters in texts.</p> <p>Examine artifacts as texts that can provide insights into contexts of people, time, or place.</p> <p>Consider how information in a text may be presented to influence an audience.</p>	<p>Teaching Strategies: Talking Circles</p> <p><i>Context</i></p> <p>Section 1: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Ancestors: Cultural Iceberg'</p> <p>Section 2: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Supplementary Text: Treaty Words'</p> <p>Section 3: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Governance'</p> <p>Section 4: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Animals'</p> <p>Section 5: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'All My Relations'</p> <p><i>Author's Craft - Influencing Audience</i></p> <p>Section 1: Literature Focus 'Allusion'</p> <p>Section 1: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Self: Repetition'</p> <p>Section 2: Literature Focus 'Discussion Questions'</p> <p>Section 2: Literature Focus 'Foreshadowing Place'</p> <p>Section 3: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Governance'</p> <p>Section 4: Literature Focus 'Discussion Questions'</p> <p>Section 4: Literature Focus 'Hyperbole'</p> <p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'Discussion Questions'</p>	<p>Talking Circles Protocol</p>

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p style="text-align: center;">Writing</p> <p>Knowledge Writing processes can be used to clearly compose and refine ideas and develop personal style, and include planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing</p> <p>Planning can help organize thoughts and prioritize information and includes consideration of audience, purpose, and form, idea generation, and narrowing a topic</p> <p>Organizational structures can help focus the expression of ideas or information, such as introduction, opening, or lead, details in order of sequence or importance, transitions, or conclusions</p> <p>Variety in sentence length and structure can enhance writing fluency and reader engagement.</p> <p>Fluent writing invites expressive oral reading that brings out the writer's voice or style.</p> <p>Revision may involve adding or deleting portions of text, moving pieces of text around, or restructuring sentences.</p> <p>Revision can ensure writing is clear, focused, informative, and engaging</p> <p>Understanding Writing can cultivate expression, problem solving, and critical thinking.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Create written texts for a variety of audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Create written texts in a variety of forms and structures.</p> <p>Develop creative expression through the use of writing processes.</p> <p>Analyze how ideas align with the purpose, audience, and form of writing.</p> <p>Express personal ideas through multiple paragraphs for the purpose of engaging an audience.</p> <p>Organize writing around clear ideas or positions that are supported by examples or relevant evidence.</p> <p>Express ideas using organizational structures that enhance writing.</p> <p>Relate ideas and connect paragraphs using a variety of transitions.</p> <p>Revise text for clarity, focus, and audience.</p> <p>Edit writing for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.</p> <p>Publish selected writing, incorporating graphics, captions, charts, or other text features to express individuality.</p>	<p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'Creative Writing: 'I am from' Poem'</p>	<p>"I Am From" Assessment</p>

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Learning Outcome Students create texts that reflect personal voice and style through creative and critical thinking processes.</p>	<p>Section 2: Literature Focus 'Creative Thinking: Personal Fantasy Place & Space' with extention writing suggestion</p> <p>Section 6: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Supplementary Text: What is the Most Beautiful Thing About Horses?' writing task</p> <p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'Creative Writing: 'I am from' Poem'</p>	<p>"I Am From" Assessment</p>
<p>Knowledge Creative thinking processes involve communicating an intent in a variety of contexts and for a variety of audiences, experimenting with ideas or processes to enhance expression, evaluating and adapting ideas in response to emerging conditions, or being determined to succeed in producing a desired effect</p> <p>The products of creative thinking may be interpreted differently depending on the perspectives of the audience.</p> <p>Words can create effects or emphasis, including simplicity, clarity, colourfulness, precision, and appeal</p> <p>Word choice can reflect the author's voice or style, including in texts that are brief, clear, and to the point (e.g., recipes, business letters); use specialized vocabulary (e.g., research reports, informative posters); provide the author the freedom to use unique or unexpected words or phrases (e.g., poetry, stories, advertisements); and express opinions (e.g., speeches, personal responses, opinion statements)</p> <p>Tone expresses the text creator's attitude toward or feelings about the topic and audience.</p>		
<p>Understanding Creative thinking can enhance personal style and voice through experimenting with, evaluating, and selecting details.</p>		
<p>Skills and Procedures Apply creative thinking processes through experimenting with, evaluating, and selecting details to produce a desired effect.</p> <p>Analyze the descriptive language and word choice of professional authors as models for writing.</p> <p>Create text that uses imagery, rhyme, dialogue, emphasis, or effect.</p> <p>Create narratives that develop setting, plot, and character using suspense, figurative language, and dialogue.</p> <p>Enhance personal style and voice through careful selection of words to create emphasis or effects.</p> <p>Analyze writing for development of tone and point of view through language use.</p> <p>Determine alternative words and meanings using a variety of digital or non-digital tools.</p>		

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Knowledge Research processes involve management of information, including questioning, gathering, organizing, and recording</p> <p>Research processes can involve accessing information from multiple digital or non-digital sources.</p> <p>Protocols for accessing information may vary by source, context, community, or culture.</p> <p>Protocols can exist for requesting permission to share stories and histories from the original owner.</p> <p>Information can be gathered and organized using a variety of methods and tools.</p> <p>Research findings can be shared in a variety of digital or non-digital forms, including graphs, tables, or charts.</p> <p>Ethical use of information includes asking permission to use, share, or store information that is about, was created by, or belongs to someone else; citing basic information used to inform writing; and fair and accurate representation of individuals or information</p> <p>Understanding Research processes can support systematic and objective management and sharing of information.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Write to inform, explain, describe, or report for a variety of purposes and audiences.</p> <p>Narrow research questions to determine a clear, well-defined topic.</p> <p>Support the main idea or topic with relevant facts, details, examples, and explanations from multiple sources.</p> <p>Summarize and organize ideas gained from multiple sources using a variety of methods or tools.</p> <p>Analyze the validity and reliability of information and sources.</p> <p>Access and use information ethically.</p>	<p>Section 2: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Exploring Place and Personal Names'</p>	<p>Place Name Research Guide to Success</p>
<p>Knowledge Written communication can be created or enhanced by selecting from a variety of digital or non-digital methods or tools, such as printing, keyboarding, or cursive handwriting</p> <p>The selection of digital or non-digital tools for written works can be adapted according to audience, purpose, form, or context.</p> <p>Understanding Written communication involves making choices to effectively convey messages.</p>	<p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'Creative Writing: Inspired by Morgan'</p> <p>Section 6: Literature Focus 'Coming Soon to Theatres'</p>	<p>Students need to explain their choices for the communication method (ie. digital or non-digital: printing, keyboarding or cursive) and what effect their choices have on the audience and overall</p>

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Skills and Procedures Experiment with methods or tools to enhance communication or create effects.</p> <p>Select a method or tool to present written works that supports clarity or voice.</p> <p>Demonstrate legibility and writing fluency through the use of printing, cursive handwriting, or keyboarding.</p>	Section 6: Literature Focus 'Map Art'	communication. They should be explaining how the choices made for communication effectively convey the overall message.

		Activities and Routines	Assessments
Learning Outcome Students apply and analyze conventions that support accuracy or enhance creative expression.	Conventions Knowledge Capitalization is used to indicate the importance of certain words in texts and can be used to create effects. Abbreviations can make communications easy to read and understand. Punctuation includes a colon, which can be used to introduce a list, give an explanation, or give an example Understanding Correct use of capitalization and punctuation can strengthen and enhance written communication. Skills and Procedures Apply capitalization appropriately in written communication. Apply punctuation appropriately in written communication. Experiment with capitalization and punctuation to create a variety of effects.	Section 6: Literature Focus 'Creative Writing: 'I am from' Poem'	"I Am From" Assessment
	Knowledge Verb tenses clearly establish the time of the actions in written or oral expression. A simple sentence contains one independent clause. A clause is a group of words with a subject and a verb and is not always a complete sentence. An independent clause expresses a complete thought and can stand on its own as a sentence. A dependent clause does not express a complete thought and cannot stand on its own as a sentence. A compound sentence contains two or more independent clauses that are usually joined by a conjunction. Understanding Communication is enhanced when correct conventions of grammar are maintained. Skills and Procedures Maintain consistent use of tense throughout communications. Use subject-verb agreement in communications. Use independent and dependent clauses in sentences. Differentiate between simple and compound sentences.	Section 6: Literature Focus 'Annotate Morgan's Poem'	
	Knowledge Spelling accuracy can be supported by the application of complex patterns. Spelling accuracy can involve understanding how words are created by manipulating prefixes and suffixes to a base (derivation). Spelling accuracy and fluency enhance written communication.	Teaching Strategies: Word Inquiry	Morphology Assessment

	Activities and Routines	Assessments
<p>Understanding Spelling accuracy can be enhanced by recognizing patterns and by making spelling-meaning connections.</p> <p>Skills and Procedures Apply spelling patterns within and across known and unfamiliar words.</p> <p>Apply knowledge of bases and affixes to spell words.</p>	<p>Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6: Literature Focus 'Word Inquiry'</p>	<p>Morphology Student Self Assessment</p>

Subject	Activities and Routines
Science	<p>Teacher Strategies 'Connection to Land'</p> <p>Opening Activity: Looking at the Stars</p> <p>Section 4: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives 'Land as Teacher'</p> <p>Section 5: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives 'Constellation'</p>
Social Studies	<p>Section 1: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Ancestors: Cultural Iceberg'</p> <p>Section 3: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Governance'</p> <p>Section 5: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives 'Tradition and Modernity'</p>
Physical Education and Wellness	<p>Teaching Strategies 'Medicine Wheel Thinking'</p> <p>Teaching Strategies 'Wayfinding'</p> <p>Sections 2 & 3: Indigenous Worldview & Perspectives Focus 'Medicine Wheel Thinking'</p>

Colour Symbol Image Assessment

COMPREHENSION Students interpret and respond to texts through application of comprehension strategies.

ONE Point Rubric				
Understanding	Teacher Notes	Strengths (student comments)	CRITERIA	Areas for Growth (student comments)
<i>Interaction with texts can deepen comprehension, expand perspectives, and help readers learn more about themselves and the world.</i>			Identify the essential factors in their own experiences.	
			Identify changes in their own perspective.	
			Make connections between events in the text and events in their life.	
			Compare personal perspectives to varied perspectives found in texts.	
			Choose symbols that represent their experiences.	

Guide to Success: Character Development Activity

The Barren Grounds

Task requirements Checklist <i>(What do I need to do?)</i>	Assessment Criteria (excellence) <i>What do I need to do to do it well?</i>	Self-Reflection <i>What's going well? What's my next best step?</i>	Teacher Guidance <i>What's going well? What revisions might be considered?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Examine the character based on what s/he says <input type="checkbox"/> Examine the character based on what s/he does <input type="checkbox"/> Examine the character based on what s/he thinks <input type="checkbox"/> Examine the character based on what others think about them <input type="checkbox"/> Examine the character based on what others say about them <input type="checkbox"/> Use character traits to classify my observations. Each trait needs at least one piece of evidence. <input type="checkbox"/> Use evidence from the text to support my ideas (either with direct quotes or paraphrasing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide multiple character traits for the character • Give several examples from the text to support the character traits I have selected. Ideally the character trait needs at least two examples of support (i.e. two pieces of evidence) • Identify if the trait(s) change over time and why that happens • Print legibly and organize my page so others can read it 	<p>What is going well (affirmed)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>What needs more work (revise)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Where I would like to go next (aspire):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>What is going well (affirmed)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Revisions to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

Morphology (Word Study)



Name: _____

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Vocabulary Students evaluate how vocabulary enhances communication and provides clarity

Conventions Students apply and analyze conventions that support accuracy or enhance creative expression.

Word Inquiry		
Understanding and/or Skills and Procedures This student can...	To what extent was this demonstrated? Highlight the option below	Feedback For Guidance Specifically explain your choice in the middle column. Provide feedback for ways to improve or extend the learning as needed.
Examine the historical origins of words in the English Language	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not evident	
Research the meaning of words with Greek or Latin roots that are still in use today	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not evident	
Study the origin and meaning of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit words in local environments	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not evident	
Examine words in the English language that have French origins.	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not evident	
Analyze how adding affixes changes the meanings of words	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not evident	
Add affixes to bases to build new words.	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not evident	
Apply knowledge of bases and affixes to spell words.	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not evident	

Morphology (Word Study)



Name: _____

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Vocabulary Students evaluate how vocabulary enhances communication and provides clarity

Conventions Students apply and analyze conventions that support accuracy or enhance creative expression.

Word Inquiry - Self Assessment		
Understanding and/or Skills and Procedures	To what extent was this demonstrated? Highlight the option below	How I Know Give examples of when you demonstrated this skill. Be specific.
Can I examine the historical origins of words in the English Language?	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not Yet	
Can I research the meaning of words with Greek or Latin roots that are still in use today?	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not Yet	
Can I study the origin and meaning of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit words in local environments?	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not Yet	
Can I examine words in the English language that have French origins?	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not Yet	
Can I analyze how adding affixes changes the meanings of words?	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not Yet	
Can I add affixes to bases to build new words?	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not Yet	
Can I apply knowledge of bases and affixes to spell words in my own writing?	Yes, completely	
	A little but could be more	
	Not Yet	

Place Name Research Guide to Success

<p style="text-align: center;">Task requirements Checklist <i>(What do I need to do?)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Criteria (excellence) <i>What do I need to do to do it well?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Self-Reflection <i>What's going well?</i> <i>What's my next best step?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Teacher Guidance <i>What's going well?</i> <i>What revisions might be considered?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gather relevant information <input type="checkbox"/> Gather information from multiple sources <input type="checkbox"/> List the sources of information <input type="checkbox"/> Share information in a clear format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include interesting and relevant details • Summarize ideas from multiple sources • Organize ideas from multiple sources • Use only information from valid and reliable sources • Include a clear main idea with supporting facts and details 	<p>What is going well (affirmed)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>What needs more work (revise)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Where I would like to go next (aspire):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	<p>What is going well (affirmed)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Revisions to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

WALKING TOGETHER

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum

Indigenous Pedagogy Talking Circles Protocol

Excerpt from *Contemporary Issues*

Teacher Resource

Government of Alberta ■





TALKING CIRCLES PROTOCOL

Excerpt from *Contemporary Issues Teacher Resource*

TALKING CIRCLES PROTOCOL

Talking circles are organized discussions used most often when a topic has no right or wrong answer. The purpose is to share ideas and points of view but not to reach decisions or consensus. In a talking circle, everyone has a chance to express their points of view.

The *Aboriginal Perspectives* textbook incorporates talking circles into classroom instruction. Talking Circle activities are designed for group discussion. They make use of Aboriginal traditions of discussion and consensus-building processes.

To keep the discussion welcoming to everyone participating, it is useful to follow a talking circle protocol. Develop an appropriate protocol for conducting talking circles within your class. Different First Nations have different protocols. Attempt to discover the protocol used by local First Nations communities. Your class may wish to define its own rules.

Whatever protocol you use, remember that the goal is to make everyone feel that they are valued and respected part of the circle. It may be helpful to post the protocol in the classroom where everyone can see it.

Many First Nations and Inuit groups traditionally used talking circles to build consensus. A consensus is a collectively held opinion. To reach consensus, the group as a whole must agree on a position. Despite the name, traditionally talking circles were not formalized like they are today. This type of discussion process could occur anywhere at any time. The participants did not always form a circle.

Talking circles allow time for each participant to speak. They slowed down the pace of discussion and created an atmosphere of respect. Each person had a chance to think about what they wanted to say as well as to listen carefully to others. This open-ended process allowed emotional and spiritual ideas to enter the discussion. Talking circles are still used in some traditional First Nations and Inuit communities today. In many current Aboriginal political organizations, consensus-based decision making remains the standard approach to conflict resolution.

Talking Circles in the Classroom

Ensure that vocal people do not dominate the discussion. An atmosphere of patient, nonjudgmental listening usually helps shy students speak out. It is often more effective to hold talking circles in small groups of four to six students.

Probe beyond neat and tidy answers. Encourage students to express what they really think, not simply say what they think others want to hear. Ask questions such as "What else do you think about that?" Be careful not to let students reveal hurtful or embarrassing information about themselves. Anticipate dangerous territory and guide the discussion around it.

Traditionally, sometimes people passed an object from one to another as they took turns speaking. Only the person holding the object was allowed to speak. In talking circle discussions in your classroom, you may find it useful to establish a way to indicate who has the floor. Incorporate a standard object to be passed from student to student, or develop a standard order, such as having students take turns speaking moving in a clockwise direction around the circle.

Talking circles may require facilitators to ensure guidelines are followed. The facilitator acknowledges participants for their contributions and may clarify comments with non-judgmental language. If necessary, the facilitator may recall the circle to the topic or to protocol. This is a challenging role that takes practice. Initially, you may wish to use someone experienced in this area; request an Elder to assist you in facilitating a talking circle in your classroom.

Guidelines for Talking Circles Protocol

- All comments should address the issue or topic at hand.
- Avoid making positive or negative remarks about other people's comments.
- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Everyone else listens without judging.
- Everyone has equal opportunity to participate. No one person should be allowed to dominate the discussion.
- Participants who are not speaking should listen without judging.
- Everyone must feel invited to participate.
- Comments should address the topic of discussion, not comments made by another participant.
- Silence is an acceptable response. No one should feel pressured to participate. There should be no negative consequences for not speaking.
- Everyone is allowed time to think about answers.
- Avoid comments that put down others or yourself, such as "I'm probably wrong but..."
- Attempt to end the discussion on a positive, thoughtful note



Rubric: Talking Circle Participation

Name: _____

Date: _____

		STUDENT'S LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT			
		4 Excellent	3 Proficient	2 Meets grade-level expectations	1 Needs improvement to meet grade-level expectations
Comment		<input type="checkbox"/> participates by listening thoughtfully, contributing to ideas, and building on and linking to the contribution of others	<input type="checkbox"/> Participates by listening thoughtfully and contributing ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> Participates by listening thoughtfully	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not participate Plan for improvement:
	LEVEL OF INDEPENDENCE				
	<input type="checkbox"/> works independently <input type="checkbox"/> works with minimal assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> works with some assistance <input type="checkbox"/> requires constant supervision and assistance			

“I Am From” Poem Assessment

WRITING Students create texts that reflect personal voice and style through creative and critical thinking processes.

CONVENTIONS Students apply and analyze conventions that support accuracy or enhance creative expression.

ONE Point Rubric				
Understandings	Teacher Notes	Strengths (student comments)	CRITERIA	Areas for Growth (student comments)
<p><i>Writing can cultivate expression, problem solving, and critical thinking.</i></p> <p><i>Creative thinking can enhance personal style and voice through experimenting with, evaluating, and selecting details.</i></p> <p><i>Correct use of capitalization and punctuation can strengthen and enhance written communication.</i></p>			Poem's meaning is clear.	
			Author has included some descriptive language to develop imagery	
			Author has considered word choice for creative effect/ impact on the reader	
			Author has expressed their own voice.	
			Capitalization to create an effect.	
			Punctuation to create an effect.	

“Say Something” Guide to Success

<p style="text-align: center;">Task requirements Checklist <i>(What do I need to do?)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Criteria (excellence) <i>What do I need to do to do it well?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Self-Reflection <i>What's going well?</i> <i>What's my next best step?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Teacher Guidance <i>What's going well?</i> <i>What revisions might be considered?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> read a section of the text <input type="checkbox"/> offer relevant information <input type="checkbox"/> consider the perspectives of others <input type="checkbox"/> listen to the statements of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read with expression and pause at a significant point. • offer thoughtful ideas. • contribute to the conversation by adding to the thoughts of others. • Expand on the contributions of others. 	<p>What is going well (affirmed)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>What needs more work (revise)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • <p>Where I would like to go next (aspire):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	<p>What is going well (affirmed)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Revisions to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

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